NOT TO BE ISSUED
OUT OF [illegible] ARY

BOMBAY BRANCH

OF THE

ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY.

TOWN HALL, BOMBAY.

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 19 September, 2016

RECOLLECTIONS

OF

A LIFE OF ADVENTURE.

BY

WILLIAM STAMER.

('MARK TAPLEY, JUN^R.')

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

20267
a1
XX-6-41

LONDON:
HURST AND BLACKETT, PUBLISHERS,
SUCCESSORS TO HENRY COLBURN,
13, GREAT MARLBOROUGH STREET.
1866.

The right of Translation is reserved.

20267

LONDON:
SAVILL AND EDWARDS, PRINTERS, CHANDOS STREET,
COVENT GARDEN.

From a Photo C.H. Jeens, sc.

Yours most Obed^t Hy

W. Stanley

RECOLLECTIONS

OF

A LIFE OF ADVENTURE.

VOL. I.

LIBRARY OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC

XX. b. 41

PREFACE.

IN the following pages I have endeavoured to bear constantly in mind that excellent advice which La Fontaine gives to authors generally—advice by which few of the fraternity care to be guided—

> "Loin d'épuiser une matière,
> Il n'en faut prendre que la fleur."

I might possibly, had I chosen to exhaust the materials at my command, have written a volume upon each of the eight different subjects of which my book treats; but I have thought it advisable to condense, and the adventures and experiences of many a long year have now been compressed into these two small octavo volumes. That these little sketches, which I am about, perhaps rashly, to commit to the hands of the publisher, are not calculated to make me many friends, I am well aware; for, in spite of much well-meant advice, I have persisted in giving my own unbiassed opinions of men and manners, even when such

opinions happen to be diametrically opposed to all preconceived notions on the subject. I have, in fact, had the dubious judgment to speak the plain hard truth, and, as the French proverb most truly says—

"Il n'y a que la vérité qui blesse."

I have neither grown mawkish over my school-days, nor attempted to hide the failings and follies of my riper years. I have described my life as it has been—its lights and shadows, its extravagances and privations, its pleasures and its pains. I do not recount what I have heard, but what I have myself seen, and if any of my sketches may appear to the reader highly coloured or overdrawn, let him remember that "oftentimes truth is stranger than fiction."

As a sailor, I experienced all those hardships and privations to which mercantile Jack is needlessly exposed; and as a soldier, I saw for myself the rottenness of our military system. Shipowners will, of course, declare that the way in which I talk of Jack and his grievances is absurd, and military men will pooh-pooh my observations on the present condition of the English soldier; but until the merchant has had his turn in the forecastle, and the red-tape gen-

tleman at the Horseguards at least a month's experience of a barrack-room, I must respectfully deny that they can be judges in the matter.

The "unco guid" will raise their hands in pious horror when they come to my "Flaneur de Paris," and exclaim, "It is easy to see what sort of company he kept in the French capital." Sneer away, gentlemen; but, before you attempt to contradict the truth of my assertions, at least take the trouble to make some inquiries on the subject: not from the reverend author of "France as it is," but from some liberal Frenchman, or any young lady who has been brought up at a French school and is not ashamed to speak the truth, and you will perhaps discover that my picture of French morals is rather under than overdrawn.

Of my other sketches I have nothing further to say than that my characters have invariably been drawn from the life, and my description of the scenes through which I passed from nature. On one or two occasions I have seen proper to transpose the order of events, and three separate visits to the Wilderness I have described as one; but this cannot be of the slightest importance to the reader. Having written entirely without notes, I may have made some trivial

errors in distances, &c., but I think these errors will be found to be few and far between, as I can generally depend upon my memory. I owe the author of "Martin Chuzzlewit" an apology for having assumed the name of one of his most celebrated characters, but as I was always known by the *sobriquet* of Mark Tapley, I have no alternative but to remain, to the end of the volume,

MARK TAPLEY, JUN.

CONTENTS

OF

THE FIRST VOLUME.

CHAPTER I.

The Golden Time of Childhood—Early Troubles—From Bad to Worse—The Rod *versus* Sentiment—A Lawyer's Recreation—A Model Public School—Thoughts on Public Education—The Worth of Competitive Examinations—Off to America — An elegant Dormitory — A bad Beginning . . . . . pp. 1—18

CHAPTER II.

Looking Out for Employment—A Classical Education at a Discount—Hard Times—A True Samaritan—An Advertisement and its Consequences—A Fatal Step—On Board a Whaler—A Mongrel Crew—The Second Mate's Joke—A Gloomy Future—Sad Reflections—Sailoring in Earnest—A Whale in Sight—Its Pursuit and Capture—"Cutting in and Trying out" — A Weird-like Scene — Forecastle Delicacies—A Narrow Escape . . . . . pp. 19—45

CHAPTER III.

Short of Provisions—An Election at Sea—We Visit the West Indies—Blanquilla—An unpleasant Holiday—A Deadly Combat—Confined in the Hold—Obstinacy or Firmness, which?—A Consul's just Judgment—The Author Escapes from the Whaler—The State of the British Mercantile Marine—Proposal for the Establishment of a Merchant Seaman's Hospital—The faulty manner in which poor Jack is paid—Black River—A Dangerous Cruise—Once more in England . . . . pp. 46—70

CHAPTER IV.

The Monotony of Barrack Life—The Monotony of Idleness Worse—Martial Fire—The Author resolves to enter the French Service—Difficulties in the Way—The French Foreign Legion during the Crimean War—The Author joins it—An Official takes his Likeness with Pen and Ink—The other Side of the Picture—At the Depôt—Good Advice—Late Repentance—Off for Corsica—A Queer Billet—Making a Night of it . . . pp. 71—92

CHAPTER V.

On the March—A Retrograde Movement—A crusty old Sergeant—*Barberous* Cruelty—A Rapid Metamorphosis—The Foreign Legion at Dinner—A Grateful Reminiscence—A Peep at the Interior of Corsica—Polenta—Corsican Firesides—Corté—The Efficacy of Tobacco—Qualifying for the Galleys—On Guard—A Decided Step—A Ray of Hope—Searching for a Substitute—Keen Bargaining—Free once more . . . . . pp. 93—122

CHAPTER VI.

Bohemians, and their Ways in Paris—Les Flaneurs de Paris—Good Resolutions—The Man who Hesitates is Lost—

A Strange Stock-Exchange Barometer—The Crédit Mobilier—A Speculator's Method of Reasoning—Buying Experience—English Folk Abroad—French and Russian Politeness compared—A French Woman at her Toilet—Little Gauls and their Ways in Paris—Parisian Hospitality—French Homes—Concerning certain extravagant Persons—Sham Don Juans . . . . . pp. 123—147

CHAPTER VII.

Young France and Horsemanship—An Equestrian Entertainment—High Play still known in Paris—An Old, Old Story—The Resources of Paris—How to live cheaply there—Taxed for being English—The Focus of all Luxury—Where does the Money come from?—Rapid Transformation Scenes—A Bit of Old Paris—An Epitaph for Napoleon III. . . . . pp. 148—168

CHAPTER VIII.

The Banks of the Hudson, now and of old—Off to the Wilderness—An antiquated Vehicle—The Region of Iron—The First Evening in the Wilderness—Forest Scenery—Light Boats—Preparations for a Sojourn in the Woods—Under Way—A Lake Voyage—The Jewel of the Forest—The First Camping Ground—A Sportsman's Rhapsody—Camp Equipage—The Building of a Shanty—How not to Catch Fish in Lake St. Regis—The Wilderness at Eventide . . . . . pp. 169—205

CHAPTER IX.

Supper in the Wilderness—American Guides and English Gamekeepers—Plans for the Morrow—The Evil Deeds of "Pot Hunters"—The Music of the Hounds—The Dignity and Immortality of Cooks—Trolling with a Spoon—An Attempt at Boat-carrying—Rough Roads—Out of

Luck—Nothing for Supper—Night Hunting—Unexpected Guests—The true Definition of a Civilized Country —At Home in the Pathless Woods—"Still Hunting" —Learning to be a Backwoodsman—First Experiences as a "Still Hunter"—Nights in the Woods . pp. 206—244

CHAPTER X.

What is "Capital Sport?"—Adventure with a Bear—The Right and the Wrong Way of Blazing—The Wild Animals of the Wilderness—The Mystery of the Wolf Scalps —How a Commissioner lost his Dollars—The best Dog for the Wilderness—A Strange Peculiarity of the Ruffed Grouse—Pigeons and Wild Geese—The North American Woods in Autumn—The Backwoodsman's Preparations for Winter — Master and Man — Winter Evenings' Amusements—Snow Pictures—Camping out in Winter —A Terrible Night—A Cold Bath—The Wilderness at its Worst—An Explosion—The Shanty becomes untenantable—Farewell to the Wilderness—Lost in the Wood — The Delights of a Canadian Winter — A few Words on mild Climates . . . . . pp. 245—289

CHAPTER XI.

Off to the Antipodes—Alone in the World—The Golden City—A Model Hotel—A Table d'Hôte in Melbourne— The Three Classes of Gold Diggers—The Gentleman Digger — The Australian Micawber — The Speculative Digger—The Genuine Digger—An old Friend in a new Dress—The Habits of the first Gold-diggers—"New Chum"—Colonial Costume—The Streets of Melbourne— An Australian Bar—A little Dancing Party pp. 290—312

CHAPTER I.

The Golden Time of Childhood—Early Troubles—From Bad to Worse—The Rod *versus* Sentiment—A Lawyer's Recreation—A Model Public School—Thoughts on Public Education—The Worth of Competitive Examinations—Off to America—An elegant Dormitory—A bad Beginning.

"THE golden time of one's childhood!" How very prettily it sounds, and yet what consummate nonsense it is after all! The golden time of one's childhood, indeed! I should particularly like to meet the man who could persuade me that he considered his school-days to have been the happiest portion of his existence, or that, in the words of the song, he would "wish to be a child again."

If there really are any men in the world who believe in the "golden prime" twaddle, I at least am not of the number; for, up to the present hour, I never recall the days of my boyhood without a shudder.

From my earliest childhood I was the scapegoat of the household. Was anything broken or

mislaid, it was sure to have been Master Mark's handiwork. In doors or out of doors, nothing could possibly go wrong without unhappy Master Mark having had "a finger in the pie." My troubles never ceased, for no sooner was I well out of one scrape, than I was forthwith into another, having to suffer for other people's delinquencies in addition to my own. I do not mean to assert that I never merited the chastisement I received, or that I was a species of infant Samuel. Far from it. My education effectually prevented that; for, although a little Christian in name, I was a rare young heathen at heart. Nor is it to be wondered at. From the time I could crawl, every Saturday night, regularly as clockwork, the toys in which my young soul delighted were put carefully aside, and all the long Sundays through I had either to sit wearily with my hands before me or listen to some pious exhortation, until my poor little temples throbbed and my brain fairly reeled, so that I could have laid me down and cried, had I not known from d experience what was in store for me, had I been guilty of such a gross piece of irreligious indecorum. And so I hated Sunday, and trembled at the very sight of that ponderous tome which in my

simplicity I thought must have been written for my especial torment.

As I advanced in years, things grew worse instead of better; for I had to attend church, and patiently listen to a long service, the very meaning of which I could not be expected to understand, drawled through by some unhappy curate, whose monotonous voice was sufficient to have sent Argus, let alone a poor child like myself, to sleep. Sleep, indeed! I knew better than to go to sleep; and so I could only hate the church and the ostensible cause of my misery, the parson. As a child, I had but few playmates; those who might have been such not being considered sufficiently refined to be the associates of such a very well-brought-up boy as myself; and, dressed like a little popinjay, I used to "take my walks abroad" in solitary grandeur, my heart the while overflowing with envy from seeing other and less favoured children allowed to make their dirt-pies in peace. I did not grieve much, therefore, when I was packed off to school; for I thought that any change must surely be for the better, and I should at least have companions of my own age with whom I could make friends. So to school I went; but before my first day was over, I had come to the painful conclusion that

school was not what I had anticipated, nor my schoolmates the generous, open-hearted boys I had expected to meet, but the veriest young tyrants in existence.

My dress, unfortunately, was never suited to my age or size, and, instead of being attired in jacket and waistcoat like the other boys, I was, on the day of my arrival, arrayed in a green merino frock, which was in itself sufficient to make me at once a laughing-stock for the whole school.

On leaving home, I had been solemnly exhorted to turn over a new leaf, and this I had firmly intended to do; but, although the spirit was willing, the flesh was weak, and my bump of combativeness so largely developed that, after patiently submitting to my tormentors for a couple of hours or more, I could bear it no longer, and had to engage in a stand-up fight, in the midst of which I was surprised by my master, on whose black list my name was from that moment permanently inscribed. My worthy preceptor was, of course, a "clergyman of the established church," and during the three years I had the misfortune to be his pupil, I can safely say that I never knew what it was to enjoy one moment's peace.

Before we were allowed to taste our breakfast, we had to repeat, like so many parrots, five verses from the Psalms, and perhaps it is for this reason that I have never been able to find in King David's composition any of those beauties which those who are, no doubt, better judges than myself can discover in every line. If at this school I learnt nothing else, I at least gained a general knowledge of the Scriptures, for a chapter in the Bible was the ordinary task for breaking a window, dirtying one's hands, and such minor offences; whilst the cane was the panacea for idleness, or for the infringement of any one of the innumerable rules of the establishment—all of which I found it impossible to remember.

How well I can call to mind the look of pious horror my reverend master would put on before he proceeded to administer a flogging which would leave me sore for a week or more, and the sanctimonious manner in which he would say to me, "My boy, it pains me more to be obliged to correct you, than it does you to receive the punishment." This was a pet phrase of his, and if I thought in those days he was——; but he is dead and gone now, so let his manes rest in peace! A learned pedagogue—who, as the head master of one of our great public schools,

ought to have known better than to have given utterance to such "bosh"—once declared that "there would be no good scholars if birch-rod went out and sentiment came in." I should just like to catch that worthy lifting his hand to a child of mine: I warrant I would give him cause to recollect me to the day of his death; for I know by experience that corporal punishment degrades and hardens instead of benefitting the recipient, making a good boy bad and a bad one worse. "Spare the rod and spoil the child" indeed! More can be done by kindness and judicious treatment in one week than by harsh usage and perpetual application of birch-rod in a twelvemonth; and until children can look up to their parents without trembling, adieu to anything approaching filial obedience and respect. Bringing up a child is very much like breaking in a colt, for, in either case, if too great severity have been used, and the curb-rein pulled too tightly, the trainer will find to his cost some fine morning that the "young 'un," in spite of all his precautions, has managed to get the bit between his teeth, and has bolted as if the devil were after him.

But to return to my school experiences. If my master desired to make me a young Chris-

tian, his son, a lawyer in the neighbouring town, was determined that I should be a muscular one, for it was his great delight to walk over whenever he could spare the time, and amuse himself by getting up fights amongst his reverend parent's pupils. As with the flogging, so with the fighting, poor Mark of course came in for the lion's share, and although I loathed my brutal bottle-holder, I must admit that, as things turned out, his instructions in the noble art of self-defence were of more real service to me than anything his father ever taught me; for, in my rough-and-tumble journey through life, my fists have often stood me in good stead when my other accomplishments would have most signally failed, or only plunged me deeper into the mire.

When I left this "Academy for Young Gentlemen," I was sent to a public school; but it was only from bad to worse, for all that I gained by the exchange was that I had fagging added to my other grievances, and severer flogging and fighting than before. I had, however, become so case-hardened, that I could take an unlimited number of strokes with a cane as stoically as a young Spartan. Indeed, I rather prided myself on the quick way in which I used to "dodge" my hand so as to prevent

the blow falling on my thumb-joint, a particularly sore part to be struck on. I may say that we were, without exception, the roughest lot of young gladiators that could have been well brought together, and our fights would not have disgraced the arena of a Roman amphitheatre or an English prize-ring. At our nightly bolstering matches, we were accustomed to cram our boots into one end of the bolster cover, so that our blows might have the greater weight and severity; and I have not the slightest doubt that many a boy has had his constitution irreparably injured by some knock-down blow received at one of these savage midnight encounters. It would be useless to give a detailed account of all the petty tyrannies of which the bigger boys at our public schools are constantly guilty. Any man who has gone through the ordeal of these facts will, I think, be obliged to own that the generosity and noble-heartedness of English boyhood, of which we hear so much, exists only in the imaginations of fond "parients," or novelists of the "Tom Brown" school.

If at the private school I had learnt little that was useful, at the public one I learnt even less; that is, if smoking and swearing cannot be so considered. The greater portion of each

day was occupied in poring over the classics, and the little time that remained was equally divided between algebra, Euclid, and history; so that if my English composition be not particularly good, and my knowledge of plain arithmetic but limited, I must attribute it to the fact of my having, like all other well-educated English youths, been too much occupied while at school in making bad Latin verses, and puzzling my brains over impossible algebraic questions, ever to have been able to devote much time to the study of my own language. From this public school I again went into private training, and under new management did at length succeed in learning something—namely, a fair knowledge of the French and German languages.

My new trainer was a man of very different stamp to the canting humbugs to whom I had been accustomed, and if I proved an unsatisfactory pupil it was through no fault of his; but altogether owing to my previous education having made me about as untractable as it was possible for a boy to be. Of all my masters, he alone was a perfect gentleman in every sense of the word, and I can never think of the continued trouble and annoyance I gave him without feelings of the deepest regret. In thus recalling the

events of my school-days, if there is one thing that invariably puzzles me more than another, it is how I managed to waste so much time in learning so little. I know that it is not for me to find fault with our educational system, when learned doctors are agreed that it is everything that can be desired; but one thing I may perhaps be permitted to say, that not only was it a decided failure in my case, but in nine cases out of ten the same result may be expected. To a boy whose position in life is already assured it perhaps matters little what the course of his studies may be, but to one who has his own fortune to make it is everything.

How often do we see men of limited income straining every nerve to give their sons such an education as will, as they hope, enable them to make their own way in the world; and how often are these hopes disappointed! Poor deluded parents! to imagine for one moment that the "liberal" education which is imparted to English youths at our great public schools is the sort of one best calculated to fit a man to battle single-handed with the world, or to qualify him for anything but what we are pleased to term one of "the learned professions." Far better, unless you have a rotten borough for one son, a

fat living for another, a commission for a third, and plenty of money for all, to send your boys to some grammar school where plain English is taught, and just sufficient Latin to form a groundwork for the modern languages; and with the money thus saved, to give them a fair start in Canada or some other colony, where the little they do know can be turned to good account.

I have met plenty of public-school educated, college-finished young gentlemen, in different parts of the world, and a more helpless good-for-nothing set, when thrown upon their own resources, it would be impossible to imagine. And yet these same youths, although unable to gain their daily bread in the colonies, would doubtlessly have been considered no end of "punkin" at home, if it had been their good fortune to have secured some little sinecure—ecclesiastical or otherwise—through the kindness of influential friends or relations. As members of Parliament they would have astonished the "House" with their knowledge of men whom they had never seen and countries which they had never visited; or as parsons, have sent their flocks to sleep, Sunday after Sunday, with soporific sermons, "cabbaged" wholesale, without even so much as

an acknowledgment, from the old divines. But in a land where patronage cannot be brought to bear, and where every man has to stand upon his own individual merits, these liberally-educated gentlemen, as I have just said, cut but a sorry figure, and are often at their wits' end to find some means of gaining their daily bread.

"Ah! but we have competitive examinations now-a-days," I think I hear some one exultingly exclaim. No doubt we have, and a more foolish, unfair manner of testing a man's capabilities could not possibly have been devised; for to have any chance at one of these same competitive examinations, the candidate must have been crammed, and any knowledge gained by cramming is superficial indeed. It is generally the one who knows least that can be crammed best, and consequently the really clever man is often plucked, when the judiciously crammed booby passes with flying colours. I myself have been crammed for a military examination, which I passed most satisfactorily, if I am to believe what my examiners said, and yet I can positively declare that in less than six weeks I had almost forgotten the trash that it had taken me six months' cramming to acquire.

From one extreme we have rushed into another.

Under the old system, so long as a man was not a downright idiot he was considered eligible for Government employ, provided always that he came of a respectable family, and had the manners of a gentleman. Now-a-days, gentility is no recommendation. The boy from an Irish hedge-school has the same chance as a Howard or a Percy in the scramble for Government appointments; and although he may have the appearance and manners of a ploughboy, so long as he can obtain the stipulated number of marks he is considered duly qualified to represent the majesty of England in any part of the world. Whether these highly-trained graduates of the modern school will prove in the end to be better servants of the crown than their much-despised and abused predecessors, is a question which time alone will solve; but for my own part, I cannot help thinking that good manners are at least as necessary as historical dates, and a knowledge of the world of more real value to a public officer than what (at Trin. Coll., Dub.) is termed science. Besides, if it is considered indispensable that the officer who administers our laws should undergo an examination, of how much greater consequence is it that every man who has a vote in the making of those laws should undergo one too. Why are not

the members of our Wittenagemote obliged to prove their qualifications before taking their seats? If they had to do so, nine-tenths of them would be plucked; and it is more than probable that, as examinations are now conducted, Gladstone would be spun in arithmetic and Russell in modern history.

I have adverted to my school-days for the purpose of showing how absurd it is to suppose that a boy can be made morally good by having religion thrust down his throat, or diligent by an *à posteriori* argument, in the shape of birch-rod; and how infinitely better it would be if parents were guided in their behaviour to their children by the dictates of common sense, instead of by the proverbs of Solomon, unless indeed they desire to have such another precious family as that of the wise king in question. No doubt my masters thought that they were bringing me up in the way I should go, but they were most grievously mistaken. With kindness I might have been won over—with harshness never. I grew sick and weary both of them and their exhortations; and, after eight years of school, I could bear it no longer; so with a few pounds in my pocket, I started off one fine morning to Liverpool, having made up my mind to throw my prospects

to the devil, and seek my fortune in the New World.

On arriving in Liverpool, I found that a vessel bound for Boston was lying in the river, and would sail the next tide, if the wind held fair. So, as one port was pretty much the same to me as another, I at once secured a steerage berth, and having purchased a few "*nécessaires de voyage*," in the shape of a straw mattress, a coarse blanket, and sundry tins, I hired a boat and went on board.

I soon found that the emigrant ship, *Paddywhack*, which was to bear me and my rather shady fortunes across the Western ocean, was anything but clipper-built, and so crammed with passengers as to resemble a great human beehive. As it was not an easy matter to find comfortable standing room, it may be imagined that the sleeping accommodation provided for the steerage passengers was of a still more limited description; and, on my descending to the "'tween decks" to take possession of the board which did duty as a bedstead, the sight that met my eyes almost baffles description. By the faint light which found its way down the open hatch, I could just see that I was in a low dark hold, against the sides of which were ranged

two tiers of bunks, each one wide enough to hold three or four human beings, when packed cheek-by-jowl. The floor of this elegant dormitory was completely blocked up with boxes and chests innumerable, on which were seated as forlorn-looking a lot of emigrants as adverse fortune had ever driven from their native sod; and when I say that, in the majority of cases, the sod was an Irish one, it is needless to add, that the closeness of the atmosphere was overpowering. There were dirty women suckling their unwashed babes, fierce, drunken drabs cuffing children of a larger growth; stalwart Milesians snoring in their stifling bunks; and amidst all the noise and confusion, two or three old men and women on their knees, devoutly crossing themselves, and praying the blessed Virgin to vouchsafe them a fair and prosperous voyage.

Unaccustomed to such scenes, I stood for some moments perfectly bewildered by the hubbub around me, and it was only when I was demanded the number of my ticket that I truly realized my forlorn and miserable position.

Fate had decreed, it appeared, that I was to share a bunk with two frieze-coated gentlemen, who evidently possessed no other garments besides those in which they stood upright, and I

shuddered when I thought what those garments would be like before our six weeks' voyage was half completed. As I called to mind the comforts of the home I was forsaking, I felt a choking sensation in the throat, and my resolution almost wavered for an instant; but gulping down the rising emotion, I clenched my teeth, and prepared to brave with equanimity the hardships which I saw but too plainly were inevitable. To share a bunk with a couple of unwashed Irishmen was of course out of the question, so I handed over a few of my remaining shillings to the steerage steward, on the condition that he should find me some place where I could at least sleep without having a man on either side of me; and he did, ultimately, point out to me a hole about the size of a dog-kennel, in which I thankfully deposited my bed, and the stores I had laid in for my voyage.

The second stage of my journey through life was thus commenced in the "'tween-decks" of a crowded emigrant ship, and a more unpromising start I could not have desired. Of the passage itself it is needless here to give a detailed account. On some future occasion perhaps I shall have to speak of the various discomforts and cruelties to which the unhappy emigrant is

exposed, in defiance of the laws which have been passed for his protection. Suffice it now to say that, after a direful passage of five weeks' duration we sighted the shores of New England, and in a few hours more the *Paddywhack* was safely moored in the port of Boston, Massachusetts.

CHAPTER II.

Looking Out for Employment—A Classical Education at a Discount—Hard Times—A True Samaritan—An Advertisement and its Consequences—A Fatal Step—On Board a Whaler—A Mongrel Crew—The Second Mate's Joke—A Gloomy Future—Sad Reflections—Sailoring in Earnest—A Whale in Sight—Its Pursuit and Capture—"Cutting in and Trying out"—A Weird-like Scene—Forecastle Delicacies—A Narrow Escape.

IT is the boast of more than one American millionaire that he began life without a "red cent," or, in plain English, without a shilling in the world. Now, all I can say is, that any man who began life with less than myself must have been poor indeed, for when I stepped ashore in Boston, I had but six shillings in my pocket, and my kit, I am ashamed to own, did not more than half fill the very smallest of valises; and yet I had no fears for the future—indeed, I may almost say, that I rather enjoyed my unenviable position, for I was young, and having no knowledge of the world, I thought that to be a free agent was in itself the *summum bonum* of all earthly felicity.

Like most hobbledehoys, I had a high opinion of my own abilities, and felt perfectly convinced that remunerative employment could be easily obtained; for of course it never once occurred to me that the liberal classical education I had received had failed to render me eligible for even the lowest seat in a merchant's office. No sooner, therefore, had I deposited my valise at a small inn near the wharf, than I proceeded to copy from the daily papers the addresses of such firms as appeared to be in search of a young gentleman of my description; and that done, I sallied forth with a fixed determination not to return until I had obtained employment in some merchant's office, where I modestly thought I need only remain until something more suited to my varied talents should offer itself for my acceptance. It was on that bright July day that I learnt for the first time my real value, which was *nil*, and how utterly I was unfitted to battle with the world or gain my daily bread. The shrewd Yankee merchants to whom I applied for employment did not even think it necessary to inquire what my qualifications really were; they summed me up at a glance, and "guessed I wouldn't do."

Poor ignorant wretches! Neither were their

accounts worked out by quadratic equations nor was their correspondence carried on in Latin hexameters; they preferred the rule-of-three and plain English, which of course I could not be expected to understand, having received the education of a gentleman, and not that of a charity boy.

After having spent the entire day in fruitless search I returned to my inn weary and sick at heart. Mine was, indeed, a hard case! Penniless and friendless in a strange land, I knew not what to do, and, like the prodigal of old, I would willingly have started home again had not twenty-five hundred miles of water unfortunately cut me off from that fatted calf which would no doubt have been killed to do me honour. For two more weary days did I continue my search with the same success; and on the evening of the third day my landlord, who evidently eyed me with suspicion, presented me with my bill, which, although only amounting to the small sum of three dollars, it was out of my power to pay. So my valise was taken as security, and I was politely requested to find a lodging elsewhere. For the first time in my life I felt that I was really homeless, and the sensation was not a pleasant one, as those who have been

in the same position will no doubt own. It was the 4th of July, the anniversary of American Independence, and all Boston was rejoicing. There was to be a grand display of fireworks on the "Common;" and as one place was pretty much the same to me as another, to the Common I went, and seating myself on a bench began to chew the cud of my bitter reflections. What was to be done? I had no money, no friends, and could not even obtain employment! Truly, America was not the *El Dorado* I had pictured to myself, but a land—

"Of sickness and sorrow;
Short allowance of victual, and plenty of nothing but gospel."

Vainly I strove to call to mind what Dick Whittington and other penniless young gentlemen had done when placed in similar circumstances, but I could not think of anything feasible; and the hours passed away and there I sat, hungry, thirsty, and homeless, without the means of procuring a night's lodging or a morsel of bread. I wandered about the streets until they were deserted, when, retracing my steps in the direction of the Common, I sat down on the steps of a house in Park Street, and fell fast asleep. Five years later I was a guest in that very house, and had I told my hospitable host that, hungry and

weary, I once could find no softer bed than his threshold, he would have been inclined to doubt his ears or my veracity, for even in everyday life truth is, indeed, often stranger than fiction.

I must have slept for a couple of hours or more, when I was aroused by a policeman, who, thinking I was drunk, told me, in no very pleasant tone, to "make tracks." As I painfully prepared to obey his commands, he looked at me from head to foot, and said, "Why, you're a stranger in these parts, ain't ye?" "Yes, I was!" and, then and there, I told him my misfortune, and how utterly I was cast down. My policeman was a true Samaritan. Without making any more inquiries, he told me to follow him; took me to a house in the neighbourhood, gave me some supper, ordered me a bed, and left me, promising to call and see me in the morning. He was as good as his word. About mid-day he made his appearance, bringing with him my valise, which he had managed to obtain from my hard-hearted landlord by payment of one half the amount charged in my bill, which he pronounced exorbitant. After a short consultation, it was agreed that I should spend the day in again searching for some suitable employment. If I failed, he could, he said, always find me some

sort of work at which I might earn sufficient to pay for my board and lodging until I could hear from home. That day I was again unsuccessful, and I was returning weary and disheartened to my humble quarters, when I chanced to see an advertisement in the window of an outfitter's shop on the wharf: it ran thus:—"Wanted immediately, green hands to go whaling; inquire within." I stopped and read the words over again—"Green hands to go whaling." "Would that suit me?" I thought. I always had a taste for the sea; and, when a child, greedily devoured all works relating to the dangers of the deep. How often had I longed to see for myself icebergs, whales, walruses, and all the other wonders of the polar regions! Here was the very chance. But then it suddenly occurred to me that whalers had to remain for many months at sea, and, once afloat, there would be no escape for me should the life of a sailor prove distasteful. "No; it would never answer," and I was turning away from the window when I was arrested by hearing a voice at my elbow.

"Yes, mate; that's jist abeout it. Only five more green hands wanted. Wish I was your age, and I'd go myself. There ain't a nicer barque nor smarter capting to be found from

Maine to Texas. Sparm whaling—no cold weather, and mortal sure to come home full in less nor a year. Step inside here, and let us have a 'cuffer' together."

As there could be no harm, I thought, in just listening to what he had to say, I accepted his offer, crossed the threshold of his accursed den, and poor "Pilgarlic's" fate was sealed. What did that lying rascal not promise me! I was to be boatsteerer, shipkeeper, mate, captain, I verily believe in less than a month after I got to sea. We were to live like fighting cocks, and were to have no work to do, except when cutting in whales. The pay was, by his account, most liberal—one hundred and fortieth "lay" he called it; in other words, I was to receive a one hundred and fortieth part of all the oil made on the cruise, and might have credit for my outfit and a few dollars to spend before starting. The last bait held out settled the matter. I had no desire to increase the debt of gratitude I owed the policeman, and, to tell the truth, my foolish pride had revolted at being forced to accept assistance from one whom I considered my inferior. By going to sea, I should be enabled to repay him whatever he had expended on my account, and avoid the disagreeable necessity of

being sent from pillar to post in search of employment. So after a certain amount of deliberation the bargain was struck, and I was then and there shipped as a green hand for the whaling barque, *Artful Dodger*, on board of which I agreed to serve for any space of time not exceeding three years.

That satisfactorily settled, my captor next proceeded to provide me with an outfit. In my chest or "donkey," were deposited oilskins, "sou'-westers," sea-boots, flannel and hickory shirts, woollen, canvass, and dungaree trousers, pilot coat, and "jumpers," sufficient to last, he assured me, for a two-years' cruise, although I could at any time procure whatever else I might require from our skipper, who would have plenty of "dry goods" on board for the use of the crew. The price he charged me for everything was extortionate, for with the few dollars he gave me—to have, as he elegantly expressed it, "a roll in the gutter before sailing"—my bill amounted to upwards of sixty dollars, for which I was obliged to give a receipt. After being warned that I might be wanted to start at any moment, I was allowed to depart; but it was with serious misgivings as to the wisdom of my proceedings that I presented myself before my

disinterested friend, the policeman, who was excessively hurt when he heard what I had done. "I need not have been in such an infernal hurry," he said, "and might at least have asked his advice before making such a foolish bargain." If I had tried for a month, I could not have selected a harder life, nor one less suited to a man accustomed, as I had been, to all the comforts which money could procure. It was too late, however, to draw back; and all I could do was, to meet my fate with a "stiff upper lip," and avoid getting into such scrapes for the future. "He would not hear of my repaying him the few dollars he had laid out for me. I should want," he said, "every cent I could scrape together to pay for a spree ashore, whenever we might run into a port for water. He had done no more for me than any other man would have done for him under similar circumstances, and he could well afford to lend me a few dollars until my return from whaling." Kind-hearted fellow! I tried to find him on my return to Boston some few years later, but he had left the city, and gone no one knew whither.

Early on the following morning I left Boston, in company with some dozen other green hands, whom the plausible statements of the cunning

shipping-master had induced, like myself, to ship on board the *Artful Dodger*, and in a couple of hours' time I found myself on board the floating prison, which was to be my home, according to the ship's articles which I had signed, for any period not exceeding three years.

The *Artful Dodger* was a tidy little barque of about three hundred tons burden, and had been only lately fitted out as a whaler. She carried three boats, and had a crew of twenty-two men, all told. Our skipper was a portly and rather good-looking specimen of a New Englander; but his two mates (of whom more hereafter) were neither of them prepossessing either in manner or appearance. The remainder of our crew consisted of three boat-steerers—the first an American, the second a Portuguese, from Fayal, and the third a Frenchman; an Irish ship-keeper, a black cook, a steward, and thirteen men before the mast, mostly green hands, who had never been to sea before.

Hardly had my foot touched the deck ere I was put to work. The second mate espied my respectable suit of clothes (the only one that I possessed), and calling me aft, asked me whether I could see the ensign at the main truck. Having answered in the affirmative, "Wal," he

continued, "I guess it's got foul of the halyards, so jist shin up and see whether you can't get it clear." Now, I had never been higher than the cross-trees of a yacht in my life, and my heart failed me when I looked up at the mainmast-head of the *Artful Dodger*. However, I knew that orders must be obeyed; so into the rigging I scrambled. It had just been tarred down, and in a moment my poor suit of clothes was ruined for ever. I looked at the mate, and there he stood grinning from ear to ear, evidently highly delighted with the success of his strategy and the destruction he had caused.

I was so overpowered with passion that I no longer felt any fear. I cleared the infernal ensign, and scrambled down upon deck, breathing threats of future vengeance against the unmanly beast, who could not allow even five minutes to elapse before giving me a taste of his miserable power and importance.

On reaching the forecastle, I found that my shipmates had already selected their bunks, the one reserved for me being the very worst of the whole lot, situated right underneath the scuttle, down which there came sufficient wind to turn a mill. It was too bad! Why should I be the man of all others to receive the worst

treatment on board? If things commenced in that way, what would they be when out at sea? I felt that sailoring would never suit my book; and I at once made up my mind to slip ashore that very night, and put as many miles as possible between myself and the ship before morning. But my escape was doomed never to take place; for hardly had we finished dinner, when a hoarse voice bellowed down the hatchway, "Now, then, down below there. All hands on deck to heave anchor." My heart sank within me as I took my place at the windlass, for I knew that my last chance had gone, and that a most gloomy future was before me. Our anchor was soon atrip; the owner of the ship came aboard to give his final orders, promised ten dollars to the man who first saw a whale, gave us a parting cheer, and with colours flying aloft, and I am sure more than one sad heart below, the *Artful Dodger*, with a spanking breeze on the quarter, stood out to sea.

Our skipper's first proceeding was to have us all mustered aft to be divided into boats' crews and watches, and, after a few minutes of dreadful suspense, I found to my great delight that, whilst belonging to the captain's boat, I was in the first mate's watch, and thus in a measure out

of the power of my mortal enemy, the second officer.

It was in the exalted position of an ordinary seaman that I took my first night-watch at sea, for, having confessed to the mate that I knew how to steer, I was rewarded for my candour by being obliged to take a two hours' "trick at the wheel." There was only a very light wind stirring, and, as the *Artful Dodger* pretty well steered herself, my thoughts soon wandered away from the compass before me into the gloomy past and the still gloomier future. There was I—unlucky devil!—who had never known what it was to do a day's hard work, now forced by adverse circumstances to serve as a common seaman before the mast of a Yankee whaler, and associate for an indefinite period with men whose habits, tastes, and feelings were altogether different to my own. What would I not have given to have been able to recall the past, or to have found myself once again within hailing distance of those friends far away, whose many kindnesses I now began for the first time to appreciate! What would my worthy pastors and masters say, I thought, could they only see me at that wheel, dressed in the garb of a sailor instead of——! But why continue the unpleasant theme? To those canting

humbugs I owed all my misfortunes, and when I remembered the many grievances I had suffered at their hands, I gave the wheel a vicious turn, and made up my mind then and there to endure every hardship rather than be again subjected to the treatment of an overgrown schoolboy.

I have no very agreeable recollections of my first watch below, for, what with my hard straw bed, the snoring of my shipmates, and the draught down the hatchway, it was nearly three o'clock before I fell into a dose, from which I was soon roused by hearing some one thundering with a handspike on the deck immediately over my head, followed by the hoarse cry of "Port watch, ahoy! All hands on deck to take in sail!" Out I tumbled; and, after nearly breaking my neck over my donkey managed to get upon deck. A great change had taken place in the weather since I had gone below: the wind had freshened considerably, and the *Artful Dodger* was heeling over to it in a way that made the "green hands" look even greener than Dame Nature had made them. The instant my head emerged from the forecastle scuttle, the mate shouted at me, "Now then, you 'English John' there, jump out, and stow that flying jib, and look spry about it, unless you want to see it blown away." I

must here mention that the captain had changed my name from Mark to John, and I was known on board by the soubriquet of *English* John, there being another John in our watch, hailing from Amsterdam, who was called Dutch John, or more frequently, on account of his laziness, "Nix-cum-heraus" (*Nichts komm heraus*). The water was dashing over the ship's bows at a great rate, and as I scrambled on to the bowsprit, the second mate, who was at the wheel, watching his opportunity, gave her a luff up in the wind, and drenched me to the skin in an instant. The cold water took away my breath, but holding on like "grim death to a dead nigger," I managed to get my feet on the foot-ropes, and crawl out to where one of our able seamen was hauling away at the infernal sail, which was flapping in a manner that threatened to send us both flying into the foaming waves beneath. I must own that I felt very queer, and did not afford much assistance to the other hand, my time being fully occupied in taking care of myself, and holding on with both hands to the jibboom, which I grasped with the energy of despair. However we, or rather he, at length managed to secure and stow the accursed thing, and with a grateful heart I once more put my foot on the deck, thanking

Providence that my work was over for that morning at all events. But I soon found that it was nothing of the kind—hardly well begun; for I was at once sent aloft to give them a hand in reefing the maintopsail. One mortal hour I was on that blessed yard. Such a set of lubbers were, I am sure, not to have been found on board any other ship afloat; I was bad enough, in all conscience, but I was an A.B. in comparison to some of the other hands.

It was six o'clock before the topsails were reefed, the mainsail topgallant sails and flying jib furled, and the starboard watch sent below, and then, drenched as I was, they kept me washing down the decks for a couple of hours more, until my bare legs were the colour of indigo. But eight o'clock came at last, and with it my watch below. Wet and cold, I had no appetite for the coarse fare which was placed before me, and after changing my clothes, and drinking a cup of hot coffee sweetened with molasses, I turned into my uncomfortable bunk, and from sheer exhaustion fell asleep. At half-past eleven I had to turn out for dinner, and as eight bells struck, I took my first "mast head." On board the *Artful Dodger*, we had always two men aloft on the look-out for whales, one of the boat-steerers taking his

stand on the mainroyal yard, and a green hand on the fore topgallant. It was to the latter that I was sent to take my two hours' look-out, and a weary and anxious two hours' they were to me. The ship was pitching heavily in a nasty short sea, and to be obliged to stand for two hours on a narrow yard with one's arm round the mast, was neither a safe nor agreeable occupation. I know that I felt so dizzy that I could scarcely stand, and how it is that more men do not lose their lives by tumbling off the yards, is more than I can make out, unless, indeed, there is, as the song says—

> "A good little angel that sits up aloft,
> Watching over the life of poor Jack."

Little did I think about whales that day. All I could do was to shut my eyes and count the minutes until it was time for me to be relieved by the unfortunate green hand next in order of succession.

And so my first day at sea, the precursor of many similar ones, passed away; the *Artful Dodger's* head was turned to the southward, and we steered for the Charleston whaling-grounds.

After a few days at sea our crew began to grow more accustomed to their work, and, to do the captain and his mates justice, they spared no

pains in their endeavours to make seamen of us. The living on board was good of its kind. "Soft tack" (fresh bread) was served out twice a day, there was an open harness cask, and we could have as much salt junk as we liked. The skipper proved to be a better sort of fellow than we had expected, the weather was delightful, and it being always "watch and watch," we could not complain of being overworked, so that if my life were not exactly agreeable, it was at least bearable, and even that was something.

We had been three weeks at sea, when one morning, just as I was about to turn in for my forenoon's nap, it being the port-watch below, I heard for the first time the cheering words, "There she blows!" sung out by the man at the mainroyal yard, and in an instant all was excitement and confusion, both above and below. The whole watch made a rush for the ladder, and got jammed in the hatchway for their pains; mates and harpooners kept flying from one end of the ship to the other, in search of line-tubs, harpoons, lances, water-barrels, and whatever else was required for the equipment of their respective boats, whilst our skipper, seated on the maintopsail yard, anxiously swept the horizon with his glass in the direction pointed out as that in which

the whales had been seen. Once more the cry, "There she breaches!" rang out from aloft; down came the captain with a run, shouting to us to lower away the boats; the davit-tackle falls rattled, the skiffs were manned, and in ten minutes I was straining away at the stroke-oar of our skipper's boat, as if my very life depended on it. The crew of a whale-boat consists of five men and the captain, who stands in the stern sheets, with both hands grasping a heavy steering oar. The harpooner pulls what we should call the "bow oar;" his harpoon ready by his side attached to the end of a strong line, which lies tightly coiled in a tub in the centre of the boat. This line is first carried aft and passed round a "loggerhead" placed alongside the steering oar. This is done to keep a constant strain on the line, and to prevent the whale, when struck, from running it out too fast, which he would do were it not for the turns taken round this loggerhead. Between the steerer and harpooner are seated the remaining four men, each one provided with a seventeen-foot oar, at which he is often obliged to labour for six and even eight hours on a stretch, as I myself have had to do before now. This being a first attempt, the pulling of the boat's crew was shocking to be-

hold, and our skipper grew perfectly frantic. He prayed, and he cursed, and he threatened, and he swore; but it was of no avail. Pull the men could not, and we advanced but slowly. Lucky was it for me that I could pull an oar, or, being the nearest to him, I might have felt the full force of his anger. As it was, he left me alone, and contented himself with swearing at the others, whom he pitched into with such vehemence that I could not forbear smiling.

"Pull, you ugly-phizzed Irish immigrant, darn you!" he would yell; "pull, you infernal loggerheaded Dutchman! Do you think I'm going to lose an eighty-barrel whale for you? Pull, will you, or I'll break your damn'd thick skull with this steering-oar," and he would jump up and stamp with rage. The ship, meanwhile, kept continually signalling so as to let us know what the whales were about. This was easily effected. When the whales came up, the blue ensign was hoisted, and lowered when they again went down; whilst, by simply running the flying-jib or gaff topsail up and down, they pointed out to us, from time to time, the direction in which the "school" was going. This state of things continued for a couple of hours or more, and I was beginning to grow very tired and hot, when

I saw the skipper's face suddenly brighten up, and all his cursing and swearing were stopped in an instant. "Ship your oars, my lads," he whispered. "Steady now; take your paddles; we're right in amongst them. Now then, you Domingo there; are you ready? Look alive; here you are; let her have it," and as he said the words, I saw something green in the water alongside, heard a whizzing noise in the air, and we were fast, he said, to a large cow whale. That we were fast to something, and that not a sprat, there could not be the slightest doubt, for our boat flew through the water at a rate which was altogether too fast to be pleasant, and our line kept running out in a manner that threatened to leave the tub empty before many minutes were over. Our skipper was evidently anxious. It was a matter of a hundred pounds to him whether we got that whale alongside or not; and as he stood with compressed lips, his hands nervously clutching the steering oar, I could pretty well guess what was passing in his mind. But after a few minutes' suspense, which was shared in by the entire boat's crew (for we all had an interest at stake), our speed visibly decreased, the line ran out slower and slower, until it finally ceased running altogether, and the

order was given to haul in the slack hand over hand, and prepare for another bout of it. We all worked with a will, and had recovered a good deal of our line, when down went her ladyship once more like a shot, and the same little game was played over again, although with considerably less vigour on her part than at first start. Several desperate attempts of the unfortunate whale to escape were frustrated in a similar manner, she all the while growing weaker and weaker, and we approaching nearer and nearer, until at length we were close alongside her, and the captain seizing his lance, sent it deep into her vitals. As he did so, she gave a convulsive lash with her tail, and I thought for a moment that we were swamped, for she only just missed striking the boat, and sent the water flying over us. No such mischance, however, was in store for us; she "sounded" once more, came up again, spouted blood, turned flukes, and our first prize lay dead on the water beside us.

The ship was by this time a long way off, and as there was hardly any wind stirring, we had to pull almost the entire distance, dragging after us our monster of the deep. It was hard work, but we were soon joined by the other boats, which had been unsuccessful, and with their aid we

managed to get along pretty lively, and had our whale lashed alongside the *Artful Dodger*, and the fluke rope passed by three o'clock in the afternoon.

There was not to be any rest for us now. A whale was alongside, and it had to be cut in and tried out before such a thing as a watch below was even thought of. So after a hurried meal we were set to work again, I and half a dozen others being told off to man the windlass. Large blocks had already been secured underneath the maintop, and through these tackle had been rove, from which were suspended the two large iron hooks used in hoisting the blubber on board. The "fall" of this tackle having been carried aft and passed round the windlass, and one of the hooks fastened in the blubber or thick skin of the whale, the word was given to heave away at the windlass, and the cutting in commenced. The bulwarks amidships had been taken away, and in the opening, armed with a "spade," which resembles an enormous chisel fastened to a long pole, stood the mate. With this instrument he forthwith began to dig away at the whale right underneath the spot where the blubber-hook had been inserted; and as the strain came on the tackle and the hook rose in the air, it carried with it a

large strip of blubber, or "blanket piece" as it is called, which grew longer and longer, until it was stopped by coming in contact with the maintop. The second hook having been fastened in the blubber as far down as possible, the strip was cut through close above it, and the upper piece lowered upon deck. In this manner a large portion of the blubber was got on board before nightfall, and the fires were lighted preparatory to "trying out."

Seated on a low stool, with a "horse" in front of me, I was kept hard at work the greater part of that night mincing blubber for the boilers. I was fairly oozing with oil, for not only was I bespattered with it whilst mincing, but the decks being covered with blubber, they were so slippery that whenever I attempted to move I was sure to fall head over heels right into the centre of the greasy mass. It was perfectly sickening, and I inwardly prayed that we might never again see another whale alongside the *Artful Dodger*. The scene on deck was so weird-like, that we might fairly have been taken for a phantom ship and crew. The lurid light from the furnaces threw a ghastly, unearthly glare on every surrounding object, and our white cotton sails up aloft looked strangely ghost-like, as they mournfully flapped in

the soft night-wind. Round the infernal cauldron stood three men, whose outward appearance was most decidedly Satanic. Domingo, the Portuguese boat-steerer, who was, without exception, the ugliest man I ever laid eyes on, was stirring the hell-broth, and only required the addition of a tail and a pair of horns to have made him pass muster for the Father of Evil himself; the second mate, who, with his piercing eyes, hooked nose, and sneering expression, would have made his fortune as Mephistopheles, stood on his left, whilst behind them loomed the dark brooding face of the Frenchman "Joe," in whose breast every evil human passion had found a refuge, and of whom more hereafter. They were a rare trio, and as I watched the firelight playing upon their truly diabolical features, I could almost have fancied myself translated to another, if not to a better world. That wretched night at length passed away, and the next morning the remainder of the blubber, and the head or case having been got on board, we were allowed to have a little rest, and partake of all the delicacies of the season, which, so far as the forecastle was concerned, consisted of what our nigger cook called "fish-balls ob whale," and which were so dry and tasteless that I hove them overboard in disgust.

It was only by the evening of the third day that our work was fairly completed, the casks stowed away in the hold, and the ordinary routine of duty recommenced. We had made sixty-five barrels of oil, worth about five hundred pounds, which, at my "lay" of one hundred and forty, placed to my credit the enormous sum of eighteen dollars all told.

The monotony of our life on board was varied from time to time by an occasional hard day's work such as I have just described, our exertions being sometimes attended with success, but more frequently the contrary. We were fortunate in falling in with schools of whales, but unfortunate in securing them. Once we had two large whales alongside, one of which we had partly cut in, when a terrific storm came on, and we were obliged to cut them adrift, all our blubber being at the same time washed overboard.

I shall not easily forget that night, for I as nearly lost the number of my mess as a man well could do. We had held on to the whales until it would have been downright madness to have attempted to do so longer, for every instant they would be sent with a tremendous thud against the sides of the vessel, shaking her from stem to stern, and making her timbers crack again. As

we ran the risk of being "stove in," our skipper at length reluctantly gave the order to cut them adrift, and I was standing at the open gangway gloomily watching one of them fall astern, for after weeks of toil it is not pleasant to see the fruit of one's labours drifting away, when a heavy sea struck the ship, deluging the decks with water, and sending me at the same time, with a quantity of blubber, flying overboard. I gave myself up as lost, for I knew they could not lower a boat, and I was some yards from the ship, which, being hove to, was drifting rapidly to leeward, when, just as I came on a line with her taffrail, another wave caught me and sent me right into the mizen chains. The second mate was, I think, the only man on board who regretted my reappearance, for I was liked by the rest of the crew, and the hearty cheer they gave me, when, dripping like a "Newfoundland," I once more put my foot on the deck of the *Artful Dodger*, was in itself almost sufficient compensation for the danger I had undergone.

CHAPTER III.

Short of Provisions—An Election at Sea—We Visit the West Indies—Blanquilla—An unpleasant Holiday—A Deadly Combat—Confined in the Hold—Obstinacy or Firmness, which?—A Consul's just Judgment—The Author Escapes from the Whaler—The State of the British Mercantile Marine—Proposal for the Establishment of a Merchant Seaman's Hospital—The faulty manner in which poor Jack is paid—Black River—A Dangerous Cruise—Once more in England.

AFTER being six months at sea we had some three hundred and forty barrels of oil on board, and as we were in want of fresh water and provisions, our skipper determined to leave the Charleston whaling-grounds for a while and make slowly for one of the smaller West Indian islands, where he could obtain what he wanted at a cheap rate. He did not come to this determination a day before it was absolutely necessary. The living on board had been for some time most detestable, and symptoms of scurvy had made their appearance amongst the crew. All the good water had been used up, and we were compelled to drink some that had been kept in old

oil-barrels, and which stank in the most fearful manner. This fluid was covered with a thick yellow scum, and was so nauseating and bitter, that it had to be mixed with vinegar and molasses before any of us could drink it; indeed, I could never manage to tackle more than a pint of it per diem, even when suffering from the most intolerable thirst. In those hard times the harpooning of a dolphin or porpoise was considered as a great slice of good fortune, and many a hearty meal have I made off both the one and the other, although I must confess that they are without exception the driest and most unpalatable of all the fish that swim the vasty deep.

But if we were badly off in the forecastle it was some consolation to know that, in the cabin, things were even worse; for there, in addition to bad living, there was bad feeling, the captain having quarrelled with his first mate, and the first mate with the second. This ill feeling at length arrived at such a pitch that the entire routine of duty on board the ship was interrupted; and we were one evening called aft by the captain, and informed that the mate was confined to his state-room, and would be sent ashore the first port we put into. We were told, at the same time, that we might vote amongst ourselves

for his successor, a gentle hint being given that the second mate was the proper man to fill the vacant office, the Yankee boat-steerer taking his place at the cabin table. What! I thought, my mortal enemy as first mate! Not if I could help it; so, on returning to the forecastle, I did all in my power to dissuade my shipmates from following the captain's advice, or giving a vote in favour of the second dickey's promotion. Unfortunately, all my rhetoric was thrown away. They thought he would be all right when he had no one to order him about but the captain; he was not such a bad sort of fellow after all, and so they gave their votes for the infernal rascal, who, when he heard the result of their deliberations, and that I alone had voted against him, favoured me with a sardonic grin which spoke volumes for the future.

A few days afterwards we made the small Island of Margarita, where my friend, the first mate, was put ashore; and as there was nothing to be obtained in the way of supplies except salt, of which we had already tasted too much, we shaped our course for St. Vincent. How delightful it was on making that island, after having been six months at sea in a dirty whaler, to behold once more the green fields and trees, and

inhale the fragrance of tropical vegetation! My heart yearned to escape, and I devised a hundred schemes by which to get clear of the *Artful Dodger*, and her thrice-accursed mate, who had already begun to give me a taste of what sort of treatment I might expect to receive from him for the future. The captain, however, took precious good care not to give me the chance of carrying out my intentions. He evidently suspected that I intended to say good-bye to the ship whenever I had a favourable opportunity, and would not allow me to put my foot ashore during the whole time we lay off St. Vincent.

Our stay was not, however, a very protracted one. The captain found the island altogether too dear to suit his book, and all he sent us on board, in the shape of fresh provisions, consisted of a few yams, bananas, and oranges, which we had consumed before twenty-four hours were over. On the morning of the third day, we again set sail in search of cheap provisions, this time making for a small island called "Blanquilla," which lies not very far to the northwards of the coast of Venezuela, and at Blanquilla we in due course arrived. Had our worthy skipper searched the whole West Indies through, I do not think he could have found a more dreary,

desolate island than the one in question, nor one less suited for the crew of a whaler to have their day's spree upon. The inhabitants consisted of an old man and his son, who had charge of all the cattle and goats upon the island, which, although the property of the Venezuelan Government, they made no scruple in selling to any passing whaler for their own individual profit. As there was not the remotest chance of my attempting to run away at Blanquilla, I was graciously permitted to make one of the party sent ashore to bring off a couple of bullocks, which our captain had purchased from the old herdsman for a little tobacco and a pair of blankets. I would much rather have remained on board, and plainly told the captain so; but he only grinned, and said that as he was bound to let me have a run ashore somewhere, he guessed he would let me have my run in Blanquilla, where he could always find me again, in case I should forget the name of my ship, which, as I had a bad memory, might perhaps happen, if I were allowed to land in any of the more thickly inhabited of the West India Islands.

There was no help for it. Ashore I had to go, whether I liked it or not, and a pleasant day's amusement I had of it after my six months at

sea, for from ten in the morning until seven in the evening we were scouring the island in pursuit of the wild cattle, which obstinately refused to make in the direction of the stockyard, or give the herdsman a chance with his lasso, which he threw more than once without success. We returned on board hot and weary, and the captain swore that if we did not do better on the morrow he would put to sea again, and we might remain for another six months without fresh provisions. He had now plenty of fresh water on board, and that was all he wanted, so that we might get the bullocks, or leave them alone, just as we pleased. For my own part, I did not care a straw whether he carried his threat into execution or not. It was clear that he did not mean to give me a chance of making my escape, and if I had to remain on board the *Artful Dodger*, even when in port, I might just as well be at sea. Things could not be much worse than they were, I thought, and might, perhaps, take a turn for the better. How my hopes were disappointed will soon be seen.

I was awoke the next morning by hearing a tremendous stamping and scuffling going on over head, and rushing on deck to see what was the matter, I found "Joe" the boat-steerer, to whose

vile disposition I have already alluded, engaged in a deadly struggle with our black cook. He had his sheath-knife out, and was making desperate efforts to drive it into the unhappy darkey, who shouted for assistance, which none of the lookers-on appeared inclined to give him, for he was no favourite on board, being, without exception, the dirtiest and worst cook in existence. I could not see the poor devil murdered in cold blood; so, making a sudden spring at the Frenchman, I managed to get hold of his wrist, which I held until the nigger had effected his escape, Joe all the while foaming with rage at my interference. On the captain's making his appearance Joe was dragged aft, and I thought the whole thing was over, but just as I was questioning the trembling wretch as to the origin of the quarrel, I heard a shout of warning, and turning round, beheld Joe making a rush towards us, with a naked harpoon in his hand. I was over the bows and on to the flying-jibboom in an instant, but the miserable "Doctor" was not so fast, and desperate with terror, he jumped clean overboard, about the very worst thing it was possible for him to do, as, once in the water, escape was next to impossible. Never shall I forget that villanous Frenchman's face, as with fiendish glee

he took deliberate aim at his victim. Poising his harpoon for an instant, he let drive. I heard a shriek, and I thought it was all over with the poor nigger, for Joe was a capital harpooner, and seldom missed his aim. But for once his shaft went a little wide of the mark. The Doctor rose to the surface, bleeding, it is true, from a deep gash on the hip, but not dangerously wounded. His life had been saved by a miracle.

All this happened in less time than I have taken to describe it. Joe was instantly secured and handcuffed, and I was sworn at by the mate for interfering. This was rather too much of a joke. After having risked my life to save a nigger, I was not going to be abused by a Yankee mate, and I returned the abuse with interest, telling him that had he been in the Doctor's place he might take his oath that I would never have stirred a hand to save him, if that were any consolation. Hardly were the words out of my mouth, when, making a rush at me, he struck me underneath the ear, I returning the blow with such effect as to put an end to his fighting for that time, at all events; but I gained little by the exchange, for in another minute I likewise was handcuffed and consigned to durance vile in the main hold. This was a nice finale to my

morning's work, and I shuddered when I thought of the morrow, for I well knew that I should be kept handcuffed there until I had made an apology to the mate, and that I determined I would never do.

Crouched on the oil-casks underneath the main hatch, the weary hours passed slowly away until sundown, when the hatch was taken off, and I was told that the captain wanted to speak to me. What he said to me was reasonable enough, and it would no doubt have been to my interest had I at once yielded to his demands, which were simply that I should make an apology to the mate, and return to my duty. Had it not been, he said, that I had hitherto done my work to his satisfaction, he would have kept me in the hold for forty-eight hours, without food, and deprived me of my afternoon's watch below during the remainder of the cruise. As it was, I had only to beg the mate's pardon, and I might go, taking care how I behaved myself for the future. My answer was given at once. I said that since the day of my coming on board the mate had never once ceased his ill-usage, although I had done my work to the best of my ability, and now, sooner than make an apology, I would rot in the hold where I lay. I could see that the captain

was surprised and annoyed at my answer, but he was just as determined as myself, and the only answer he vouchsafed me was simply "to rot and be d——d."

So to that dark, close hold I was again consigned, and there I remained for two long weary weeks, which to me appeared like as many centuries. Every morning I was allowed to walk on deck for a quarter of an hour, at which time the captain would go through the form of asking me whether I had changed my mind; but my answer was always the same—I would die rather than make an apology, and he might take the consequences when he returned to port. During the whole of these terrible two weeks, although I was only supplied with a very limited allowance of biscuit, it was more than I could possibly eat, whilst my three pints of water were altogether insufficient to allay the burning thirst with which I was constantly tormented, both night and day. Added to this, my body became so sore from lying on the casks, that after the first few days I was forced to sit upright, with my back against a board, in which position to sleep for any length of time without waking was out of the question. I daily grew weaker and weaker, until at length I had barely sufficient strength left to enable me

to crawl upon deck, when the time came for my miserable quarter of an hour's exercise. Although I felt that I could not last very many days longer, I was perfectly resigned to my fate, and thought of my approaching dissolution with a stoicism which I cannot now recall without amazement. But to end my days in the dirty hold of a Yankee whaler was not to be my fate after all. One morning, I knew from the noise and bustle on deck that we were making some port, and shortly afterwards I heard the voice of a pilot giving orders to the man at the wheel, in some unintelligible jargon very unlike English. How I listened to every sound! At length the order was given to take in the topgallant sails and clew up the mainsail. We were evidently getting close in; a few minutes more and the motion of the vessel suddenly ceased, the topsail-halyards were let go with a run. I could hear voices on shore. We were close alongside a wharf, and my troubles were nearly ended, at least so I hoped. Two long hours passed away before any notice was taken of me; but at length the hatch was once again removed, and I was told to come upon deck. The captain was standing talking to a sallow individual, who turned even sallower when he saw me, for I presented a wretched

appearance, looking more like a corpse than a human being. The sallow individual was the gentleman who was supposed to represent the United States Government at the Dutch island of Curaçoa, where we then were, and a meaner specimen of Jewish humanity I never laid eyes on. No sooner had I made my appearance than the skipper proceeded to give a detailed and rather one-sided account of my insubordination and misconduct, and how he had been obliged to confine me in the hold for want of a better place, until he could make some port where there was a consul before whom he could bring me for judgment.

Now, if the wretch had only possessed one particle of manhood, he could have given but one answer—"Send him to hospital, and get another man in his place." But no; he hummed and hawed, talked of the enormity of my offence, and concluded by telling the captain that, as I appeared to have suffered sufficiently, he had better release me and let me return to my duty. Return to my duty, indeed! I certainly was in a precious fit state for duty: my body covered with sores, and not an atom of strength left in me! No; sooner than do another stroke of work in the accursed ship, they might heave me

overboard; and my shipmates would see that I was not unavenged. Now, during my incarceration, the mate had managed to quarrel with the whole crew, and my treatment had not added to the captain's popularity; so no sooner did I speak of my shipmates than a dozen voices cried out, "That's so, John; we wont forget you, never fear."

The captain's eyes sparkled with rage, but the consul drew him on one side, and talked earnestly with him for some time; and the end of it all was, that they told me I might leave the ship, forfeiting my wages and everything that I had on board, as I was in the captain's debt to the amount of seventy dollars. I was only too glad to get clear of him at any price; and without saying another word I turned my back on these two worthies and set about making preparations for going ashore. It was some consolation to feel that I had the sympathy of my shipmates; and to do the honest fellows justice I must say that they proved themselves true friends; for the little they had was freely offered to me when they found that I was about to leave them empty-handed. Poor fellows, I hope their voyage turned out a prosperous one, and that the mate behaved better to them after my departure. But

as to the *Artful Dodger* herself, the evil that I wished her slowly but surely came to pass. She was captured and burnt by a Confederate cruiser, and the little that remained of her, bolts, coppers, sheathing, &c., is now reposing a thousand fathoms deep at the bottom of the wide Atlantic.

On stepping ashore I possessed nothing but my own suit of clothes, which, with the aid of grease and turpentine, I had managed to make sufficiently respectable, and four dollars in silver, which was not sufficient to pay my passage to the nearest English island, even had there been direct communication, which there was not. But fortune for once proved my friend; for as I stood on the wharf, a top-sail schooner, with cattle on board for Jamaica, came into port, and on applying to the captain for permission to work my passage as far as that island, he in the kindest manner told me that I was welcome to a berth in the cabin—an offer which I gladly accepted. The next morning we stood out to sea; by mid-day Curaçoa was a mere speck on the horizon, but not until it was completely lost to view did I breathe freely, nor fully realize the blessed reality of being once again, after seven months' bondage, a free man.

Although we were only four days on the passage

it was really wonderful how I picked up health and strength in that short time. After three weeks upon biscuit and water, an unlimited supply of fresh meat, fruit, and vegetables had a magical effect in restoring my worn-out tissues; and were it not that I was still bruised and sore when I landed in Kingston, there was nothing particularly the matter with me. The day after my arrival I set about looking for some vessel bound to England, and before many hours were over I had shipped on board a Liverpool brig which was about to sail for Black River to take in a cargo of sugar. It was on board of this brig that I first learnt how our so-called "British merchant-princes" treat their seamen; and now that I know a little more concerning English mercantile Jack and his grievances, the only thing that surprises me is that we have a single able-bodied sailor remaining in our mercantile marine. Shipowners complain that good men are scarce: and whose fault is that, I should like to know, if not their own? Do they deserve to have good crews when, for the sake of a few pounds, they will consent to have bad rations put on board their ships, and not even a sufficiency of them? Our living on board the *Pinchgut* was something fearful, and the forecastle not fit for a pig to sleep in.

The biscuit was mouldy, the pork rancid, the beef so long in cask that it sparkled like so many diamonds; and yet, notwithstanding all this, our meat was daily weighed out to us in the presence of the captain, who would stand with his one eye fixed on the steelyards, to see that not an ounce was given over and above our strict allowance. As to fresh bread, such a thing was never dreamt of on board, and our "duff" was the colour and consistency of lead, all the ills arising from this unwholesome diet being supposed to be counteracted by a thimbleful of lime-juice, served out daily according to act of Parliament. Oh, most honourable gentlemen of the Lower House, how thankful ought poor mercantile Jack to be to you for the many benefits which from time to time he has received at your hands! Not a member is there of your honourable House who is not perfectly satisfied that everything has been done for poor Jack that wise legislation could accomplish. He is shipped, and worked, and paid off according to act of Parliament; by act of Parliament he has so much bread, meat, water, and lime-juice served out to him; even his very medicine chest is subject to Government inspection. What an ungrateful villain he must be after all this to complain of the manner in which

he is treated! To most men he may perhaps appear so; it certainly does seem at first sight as if Jack had little cause for complaint, but as there are always two sides to a question, I will just say a few words for poor Jack.

No one will, I think, be inclined to assert that the life of a merchant seaman is an enviable one. To use Jack's own words, he is born hard, works hard, lives hard, dies hard, and if, after all, he is to be d——d, as the parson says he assuredly will be, it is indeed very hard. Now I know it will be immediately said, all that is, in a great measure, Jack's own fault; he is drunken and improvident. Admitted; but he is that mercantile Jack, notwithstanding, without whom our ships would have to lie rotting alongside their docks, and our vaunted merchant princes become hopelessly bankrupt. And why is it that Jack is so improvident, drunken, and worthless a character? Simply because, having no hope for the future, he thinks it the wisest plan to take the small amount of enjoyment that falls to his lot whilst he has the chance, and he has a periodical roll in the gutter accordingly. Money can be had in abundance to build asylums for the decayed and worn-out members of almost every trade and calling in this country, the mercantile marine

excepted, and it is to our shame that it should be so. Here for years past nothing has been talked of but Albert memorials. Every little town must needs have a monument of some sort to show the loyalty of its inhabitants, and thousands of pounds have been frittered away in the carrying out of designs which had neither usefulness nor beauty to recommend them, when, by a single hint from the right quarter, the entire amount might have been devoted to the erection and endowment of some noble hospital for decayed merchant seamen, which, as the "Albert Hospital," would have been a fitting tribute to the many virtues of a really good man, who took more than an ordinary interest in the welfare of our seafaring population.

If such an hospital were to be erected, it is my firm belief that a wonderful change for the better would soon be apparent in Jack's habits and demeanour. Good conduct being the only qualification by which a seaman could become eligible for admittance, Jack would either have at once to turn over a new leaf or give up all hopes of ever becoming an inmate of the Albert Hospital. The rules to be laid down for Jack's guidance could be made extremely simple. Every apprentice or ordinary hand, on going to sea for

the first time, would be furnished with a small book, something in the style of the *livret* of the French soldier. In it would be inscribed his place of birth, name, age, &c., and the date of his first going to sea. Each page throughout the book would represent a voyage. There would be the name of the ship and that of her captain; the port from which she sailed and whither bound; the duration of the voyage; capacity in which Jack served; his conduct whilst on board, the amount of his wages, and his receipt for the same, in full. In fact, this book would not only be a condensed history of Jack's life, but do away with the necessity of discharges altogether. At the beginning of the book it might be briefly set forth that the Albert Hospital had been erected and endowed by the English nation at large, and presented in their name to the mercantile marine of Great Britain, as an asylum in which merchant seamen of good character might end their days in peace; that to become eligible for admission into the hospital nothing was demanded but general good conduct whilst at sea during a period of not less than twenty years—a pretty stiff term of trial for a merchant seaman. That the pensioner would be provided with food, clothing (not such a livery as most recipients of charity are

forced to wear in this country, more shame to the donors; but a monkey jacket, and blue cloth trousers), a moderate allowance of grog, and tobacco, and lastly, that he would never be ejected except for gross misconduct. Any savings that Jack might be able to make during his term of servitude could be invested for his benefit, so that he would have a small sum wherewith to purchase trifling luxuries, which would add to the comfort of his old age. This is my idea of a sailor's hospital, and I only wish I had the means or the power to see it carried out, for the will itself is not wanting. English Jack would then have little desire to exchange his own for the American merchant service. He would no longer be so fond of running away in foreign ports, for he would forfeit his "small book" by so doing, and, having hope for the future, and a stake in the country, he would become more thrifty, and a better patriot than heretofore.

But whilst providing for Jack's future, something ought to be done to improve his present condition, for the Merchant Seamen's Act is a very one-sided affair, framed altogether, it appears to me, for the protection of the shipowner, and not for Jack at all. We will suppose, for instance, that Master Jack has shipped in London, for a

vessel lying at Gravesend. Well, on taking his traps on board, he finds that the ship is unseaworthy, making water so fast as to require the pumps to be kept going for a quarter of an hour twice in each watch. Jack refuses to proceed to sea, is immediately taken ashore, brought before the nearest magistrate, and gets three months' hard labour for his pains. Jack has no business to question the seaworthiness of his vessel. Has she not been classed as A 1 at Lloyd's? and if after that she goes to the bottom, why it is the insurers' look-out, not Jack's. Excellent reasoning, certainly! But supposing that Jack does consent to proceed to sea, what treatment does he receive on board? I answer unhesitatingly, in nine cases out of ten, a deuced deal worse than does any "sassy" nigger on a slave plantation. His forecastle is a pigsty, insufferably close in fine weather, and flooded with water in a gale of wind. His meals are thrown to him in a dirty "kid," the floor of the forecastle being his dining-table. He is bullied by the mates, and "logged" by the captain, and all he can do is to grumble, and threaten to complain to the "counsel" the moment he puts his foot ashore. Complain to the consul, indeed! He might just as well address his complaints to the vessel's figure-head, for of course the consul has to sup-

port the captain, or there would be an end to all discipline on board; so Jack is sent away with a flea in his ear, and receives worse treatment than ever. I am perfectly aware that Jack is not a pleasant sort of fellow to deal with. Grumbling is his normal condition; and he would try the patience of Job. If he be given salt meat, he wants fresh; if fresh, salt; if he is worked hard on board a "liner," he thinks, with a sigh, of the easy life led by a yachtsman: put him aboard a yacht, and he will wish he was again in the liner. But notwithstanding all this, there is no reason why Jack should be treated like a dog. If a man cannot do his work, disrate him, *but divide the money he forfeits amongst his shipmates who have to take his duty.* Above all, the instant the voyage is over, and the stern hawser ashore, let him be paid his wages *at once,* and have done with him: his part of the contract being completed, the owners' ought to be so likewise. The manner in which our merchant seamen are at present paid off is a disgrace to the British nation. It is by having to wait for his hard-earned gains that Jack falls into the clutches of the boarding master, for, having no money in his pocket, he is obliged to go upon tick, and he has to pay for the accommodation accordingly. Every one is in league

against poor Jack. From the den of the boarding-master he goes straight to that of the rascally outfitter; the doors of the publican are next thrown open to receive him, "Sal" all the time watching her opportunity to pounce upon her prey, and so it goes on until the poor fellow's money is all spent, and the shipping-master finally steps in and claims him for his own. But let the curtain drop over Jack and his grievances: I suppose it is simply because I have been before the mast myself that I take such an interest in the poor fellow's welfare—perhaps it may be so—and if the little experience I gained whilst serving as a common sailor could only be turned to account, and by appealing to the sense of justice of the British nation I could in any way benefit Jack, I should feel myself fully compensated for the many hardships and privations that I myself underwent whilst at sea.

But to return to the *Pinchgut*. We sailed for Black River the evening of the same day I went on board, and for the next two weeks were hard at work getting in our cargo at that infernal hole. Whilst there, I had another narrow escape for my life, being nearly drowned for the second time. The evening before we sailed I received orders to take the "gig" up the

river, and hand over her iron ballast to the owner of the plantation whence we were shipping our sugar. Accompanied by a young nigger-boy to mind the jib-sheet, I set sail, and by sun-down had discharged the ballast, and recrossed the bar of the river on my return-trip. But it was fated that I should not get on board that night. The wind had freshened considerably, and was blowing right in shore; and, as luck would have it, the infernal young nigger managed to lose his oar overboard, so that there was no alternative but to endeavour to beat off to the brig which lay at anchor some two miles distant. I should have been able to effect this without difficulty had it not been for the obstinacy of the black boy, who would never let go the sheet when I told him, thus losing me a quarter of a mile or more every time I went about. Night came on, and we were still half a mile from the brig; and I was just calculating whether it would be better to try one more tack, or make for the shore again, when I was saved the trouble of deciding by a gust of wind striking us and turning us keel upwards in a twinkling. I scrambled on to her bottom without one moment's delay, for the bay was alive with sharks; and, after some difficulty, succeeded in catching the darkie by the wool, and

hauling him up alongside me. Slowly we drifted ashore, I all the while venting my rage on the unhappy nigger, whom I threatened to kill if ever I reached the shore alive. At length we were brought up standing by the mast striking the ground; and, plunging into the sea, I made for the shore, in mortal terror lest some shark might smell fresh meat, and nip off one of my legs for his supper. My worst mishap, however, was putting my naked foot on a sea-egg, from the effects of which I suffer to this day. I passed the night shivering in a tree, and the next morning the darkie, who had preferred remaining on the boat, and myself, were picked up and deposited safely on board the *Pinchgut*.

This was my last mishap. After a six weeks' voyage we arrived in Liverpool, and my sailoring experiences were, as I erroneously imagined, for ever ended.

CHAPTER IV.

The Monotony of Barrack Life—The Monotony of Idleness Worse—Martial Fire—The Author resolves to enter the French Service—Difficulties in the Way—The French Foreign Legion during the Crimean War—The Author joins it—An Official takes his Likeness with Pen and Ink—The other Side of the Picture—At the Depôt—Good Advice—Late Repentance—Off for Corsica—A Queer Billet—Making a Night of it.

PREVIOUS to the breaking out of the Russian war, I had for some time the distinguished honour of holding her Majesty's commission in a certain line regiment then quartered in Ireland. To say that I duly appreciated that honour would be to tell an untruth; I did not. The dreadful monotony of barrack-life, together with other grievances, amongst which I may enumerate slow promotion, small pay, large expenditure (we were in Dublin), and last, but not least, the eternal drill, at length made the whole thing unbearable; so one fine morning I took my *congé* of the gallant corps, and ceased to belong to her Majesty's service.

One would hardly credit that after having enjoyed the sweets of liberty for a season, I could

have desired to return to a bondage that I detested; and yet it was so. I was ever of a capricious disposition, and I no sooner heard that war had been declared against Russia than I left my shooting quarters in America, and, taking a berth in the first Cunard steamer from Boston, made my way straight to London in the full assurance of obtaining an immediate appointment to some regiment about to proceed to the seat of war. I was disappointed. My ungrateful country, represented by the "Horse Guards," politely declined my services, and an embryo Wellington was thus for ever lost to Great Britain. But the martial fire that burned within my breast was not to be so easily quenched; it certainly smouldered a little after the damper from the Horse Guards, but only to burst forth with even greater intensity. After reading the accounts of the battle of the Alma, a bright idea suddenly flashed across my mind, and the difficult question of how to obtain military renown was solved in an instant. Red tape, it is true, had deprived England of my valuable services, but was there not an *entente cordiale* between perfide Albion and La Belle France? Had not John Bull and M. Jean Crapaud sworn eternal friendship, and were we not one people? Fool, that it did not strike

me before. Happy inspiration!—heroic resolve! —magnanimous self-sacrifice on the altar of friendship! I would start at once for Paris, and offer to fight in the ranks of those brave Gauls who were now to us not only brothers but allies. I would assuredly have to enter the service as a simple soldier, but what of that? Had not scores of renowned French marshals likewise begun their military career in the ranks? Would not I, also, carry an imaginary *bâton* in my knapsack, and had I not a friend at Court who would take care that my interests were well looked after? Of course I had, so, without more ado, I packed up my traps, and "made tracks" instanter for Paris. Arrived in that city, I lost no time in presenting myself at the house of the friend in question. I had cosmetiqued and twisted my moustache in the approved French style; my hair had been cut short, whilst a blue frock coat, closely buttoned, added not a little to my military appearance. I flattered myself that I looked like a fierce, reckless soldier of fortune, who would be considered an acquisition to any regiment. Even the *concierge* drew himself up, and gave me the military salute as I passed before his lodge, and on my ringing the bell and inquiring whether the General was at home, his servant was so excessively respectful

that he must have taken me for some foreign officer of high standing. I was then on anything but bad terms with myself, as the obsequious servant, throwing open the door with a flourish, ushered me into a small study, and I once again found myself in the presence of his mightiness. He received me most cordially (all Frenchmen do, when they think you want nothing), and immediately began talking with great volubility of the recent operations of the allies before Sebastopol. This was the very opportunity I had desired, and without a moment's loss of time I told him the reason of my visit; how ardently I desired to become a soldier of the Empire (didn't it sound like a line from one of Lever's novels?); how determined I was to distinguish myself, throwing in a gentle hint that any little assistance he could give me in the furtherance of my project would be most thankfully received. I could not, I modestly said, expect immediate promotion, but I did hope that he would be able to have me drafted into the "Chasseurs d'Afrique," as I had set my heart upon belonging to that distinguished corps.

Now, if the General's face was to be taken as an index of his thoughts, it appeared to me that the worthy gentleman entertained at one time

strong doubts as to my sanity, for, as I proceeded, he opened his large eyes wider and wider, his lower jaw dropped, and once I thought he made a movement towards the bell, as if it had suddenly struck him that assistance might eventually be required. After I had concluded, the General remained silent for some time, fixedly looking into my face to discover, no doubt, if perhaps I had not been enjoying a joke at his expense. But my countenance was serious in the extreme, not a smile was there—indeed, there was nothing to laugh at, for the old gentleman looked anything but amiable, and when he did at length speak, I felt for an instant even more disheartened than I had done after receiving my answer from the Horse Guards.

"I at first imagined," he said, "that (*farceur* as you are) you were only having a little *plaisanterie* at my expense; but now that I find you are really serious, I can only say in one word that your project is impracticable."

"But why so?" I urged.

"For the simple reason," he replied, "that you are neither a Frenchman, nor yet even a French subject."

"But do you mean to tell me," I continued, "that no one is eligible to serve in the French army unless he be a Frenchman born and bred?"

"Most assuredly—unless, indeed, he may have become a naturalized citizen; but even to accomplish it in that way, you would require to make a protracted sojourn in France. I forget how many years it is."

Here was a pretty state of things. After having left my comfortable quarters in the States, and given myself an infinity of trouble, to be first rejected as an officer in England, and now, worse than all, as a private soldier in France—it was too bad. I determined, however, not to be quietly put off.

"Then do you really mean to tell me," I persisted, "that there is not a single regiment in the French army open to foreigners?"—the exploits of "Polish Lancers," "Irish Brigades," and "Scotch Archers," which I had read of in Scott's and Lever's novels, coming vividly to my recollection.

"Oh, faith, yes," he replied, "I had almost forgotten. There is, to be sure, one corps open to you—the 'Foreign Legion;' but it strikes me that you would not particularly care to join that lot."

"But why so?" I demanded.

"Why? Because brigands, thieves, assassins, and deserters from every army of continental

Europe make up the muster-roll—and, poor devils! they suffer for their sins. It is either Corsica, Algeria, or the field of battle for them, and the old gentleman fly away with me if I don't think they would prefer the latter, if it were not that they have all the fighting and no glory!"

"Then be it so," I said. "I have made up my mind to join some corps or another, and since I cannot do better, I must e'en join the Foreign Legion. Where did you say that their head-quarters were?"

"Corsica. But *peste*, my friend, let me entreat of you not to be such a consummate ass as to join that legion of devils. You little know what is in store for you, and bear in mind that it is war time, and that once enrolled you would find it almost impossible to obtain a substitute should you desire to leave the regiment."

Most patiently and kindly did the old soldier endeavour to dissuade me from my rash project. But no; I was as stubborn as a mule, and go I would. On taking leave of the General, who really did appear interested in me, he frankly told me that he could not advance my interests in any way, so far as promotion was concerned. "But," he added, "whenever you may desire to leave that infernal Legion, let me hear from you through

some friend in Paris, and I will write to the General commanding at Bastia in your behalf."

And so I left Paris, and journeyed southwards to Marseilles. Arrived in that city, I forthwith went to the office of the "Etat-Major," and was the very next day enrolled as a volunteer for the "2me Régiment de la Légion Etrangère." I flatter myself that I created a considerable sensation in that office. The grizzly old bear at the head of the department evidently could not make me out, and his perplexity was shared by his subordinates. How was it that I, a man with money in my pocket, a good coat on my back, and, it is with diffidence that I say it, extremely good address, could voluntarily enter such a regiment as the Foreign Legion, was beyond their comprehension. I think that the younger and more romantic *employés* in the office inclined to the belief that I had been thwarted in love, and had joined the Legion in the hopes of being killed on the field of battle, whilst the older hands shrugged their shoulders and muttered, "Poor fellow, he is an Englishman, and must certainly be half-witted." Before leaving the office, they in the kindest manner presented me with a *livret* or small book, in which they had taken the trouble of inscribing the names of my parents (Mr. and Mrs.

Tapley); Tapley, I assured them, being our patronymic—my place of birth, that, of course, was London, my profession put down as *rentier* (I had some doubts as to whether *banquier* would not sound better), and finally a general description of my person, so that I might not forget my own individuality. It ran something in this way, if I remember rightly, for, unfortunately, my *livret* was burnt one fine morning during a bush fire in Australia, and I no longer have it to refer to:—

Name	Marc Hercule Tapley.
Name of Parents .	Marie et Guillaume Tapley.
Age	Twenty-two years.
Height	One metre, and the Lord only knows how many centimetres.
Profession . . .	Rentier.
Where born . . .	London, England.
Face	Oval.
Forehead	Open.
Eyes	Grey-blue.
Hair	Chestnut.
Beard	Auburn.
Chin	Dimpled.
Nose	Good. (I particularly recollect this very flattering description of my nasal organ. It was *bien formé* in the original.)
Mouth	Small.
Complexion . . .	Florid.
Particular marks .	Scar in centre of forehead.

All this was very good, and as it should be; indeed, I was rather flattered with the description given of my personal appearance; but on turning over a leaf or so I came upon one ominous page, headed "Wounds!"

Good heavens! what a deplorable condition I should be in, I thought, if that page were ever to be filled up—one of those grey-blue eyes extinguished, the well-made nose flattened like a Don Cossack's, the metre and centimetres shortened by a couple of feet, the small mouth slit from ear to ear, and the distinguishing scar in the centre of the forehead no longer to be distinguished from a score of others on that oval face. It was too horrible to be thought of, so, in despair, I turned to the last page, where, horror of horrors! I found to my dismay a list of crimes with the appropriate punishment attached to each—Death! Death!! Death!!! "Le boulet" (a cannon-ball attached to one's body by a chain) for five, ten, fifteen, twenty years—for sleeping on one's post—death!—oh Lord, oh Lord! If by any chance whilst on duty in the Crimea I should be overcome by the intense cold, as I had often been in America, and fall asleep on my post—what then? A drum-head court-martial; sentence, a short march in the grey light of a winter's morn-

ing, a firing-party, the clear, ringing words, "Make ready—present—fire!" and Marc Hercule Tapley would cease to belong to this world, and his name would no longer adorn the roll of the soldiers of the Empire. I experienced a most disagreeable sinking sensation in the region of the heart, and was rushing out to fortify myself with a glass of cognac, when I was suddenly recalled to a true sense of my position by the individual who had filled up my "livret," and to whose care I had been consigned, shouting after me, "*Halte-là!* where are you filing to there?"

Why, I was only going to get a glass of brandy. "But no, my brave! you cannot go filing about in that manner," said my superior officer of ten minutes' standing—full Corporal Cornichon, who stank of garlic—"but I will conduct you to the depôt barracks, and we can have a drop on the road!"

There was no help for it; but I already began to feel that I had made a fool of myself, and heartily wished that I could recall the events of the last few days. Accompanied, therefore, by the corporal, who, though ostensibly my guide, was in reality the keeper appointed to hand me over to the military authorities, I emerged from the gloomy office into the bright pleasant sunshine—

pleasant, alas! to me no longer; and feeling that I had not sufficient moral courage to be seen walking arm-in-arm with my red-breeched comrade, I proposed that we should take a carriage as far as the military depôt, which was situated in the outskirts of the town. To this proposal M. le Caporal assented with great glee; for French soldiers on five sous a day do not ordinarily indulge in hired conveyances. So, after a good deal of jolting over the ill-paved streets, we finally reached our destination. Marseilles was swarming with soldiers, all *en route* for the Crimea, and every barrack was crowded to suffocation—no wonder, then, that the authorities cared but little about the accommodation provided for Sergeant Pike and his raw recruits. The depôt to which the corporal conducted me appeared anything but inviting outwardly, whilst internally the dirt and filth were past description. In a long, low, dark room, redolent of a thousand and one stinks —bad tobacco and garlic being the predominant ones—lay some hundred soldiers in every imaginable position. All branches of the service appeared to be there represented—Grenadiers, Voltigeurs, Carabineers, Hussars, Engineers, Artillery, were all jumbled together; invalids from the seat of war forming a large percentage of

the whole. At one end of the room was a sort of temporary canteen, round which a party of soldiers were shrieking and gesticulating as only Frenchmen can. As the corporal threw open the door, and ushered me into this Pandemonium, there was a dead silence—my future comrades being even more puzzled as to my rank than had been the *employés* at the office of the the Etat Major; but they were not long left in suspense—Corporal Cornichon, walking straight up to the bar, "*tutoyering*" me all the time in the most horridly familiar manner, clapped me on the back, and asked me to take a glass of cognac with him. A buzz went round the room, when, raising the thimble-full of liquid fire, which was supposed to represent brandy, to his lips, he said, "Health, comrade, and good luck to you!"

"What!—was I also a soldier? Of what regiment?—in what department? What part of France did I belong to?"

"An Englishman!! *Sacre tonnerre!!!*"

"For the Foreign Legion!! *Troun de Diou!!!*"

Here the whole lot crowded round me, and inundated me with questions. They were soon answered. I had joined the Foreign Legion because no other regiment was open to me. Had been in the English service, but had left it,

and could not, therefore, join again; was in no want of money—quite the contrary, would be most happy to stand treat for all. Now pretty well understood what the Legion was like, would only remain in it so long as suited my convenience, and so on, *ad infinitum.*

Having money in my pocket, I soon became popular; half-a-dozen hungry looking, ill-clad Germans introduced themselves to me as aspirants, like myself, to military renown in the ranks of the second regiment of the French Foreign Legion, and I cannot say that I felt proud of my future brothers in arms, rather the reverse. However, I gave them something to eat and drink, and thus made them for ever my most obedient slaves; for I find that in all parts of the world men are more or less governed by their stomachs, and a good dinner will oftener convert a man to your own way of thinking than all the eloquence of a Burke. After hob-nobbing with the whole lot for an hour or more, a weatherbeaten, grey-headed old corporal of Grenadiers, who appeared by general consent to be the head of the establishment, tapped me on the shoulder, and asked me to take a turn with him outside the building. I was only too glad to leave the noise and heat; so I readily consented—much, I fear, to

the chagrin of the rest—who began to look upon me as a sort of military Rothschild, upon whom they could draw for an unlimited supply of absinthe, armagnac, and such like seductive drinks dear to French palates.

The old corporal spoke to me like a father. "My child," quoth he, slowly stroking his long grey moustache, "it seems to me, to speak plainly, that you have put your foot in it, and the sooner you endeavour to withdraw it the better. If you have any interest, use it at once—write this very evening, and see whether you cannot obtain permission to leave the regiment, without either proceeding to Corsica or procuring a substitute. I don't know much about such matters, but it appears to me, that if you were to represent your case and pay some money, you would be allowed to walk off. Money does much, and if you have it, better to spend it in getting clear of the whole business, than have it stolen from you by those gentlemen of the Legion. I have been quartered with them myself once, and, *tonnerre de Dieu!* it is a privilege I don't desire again." In this strain the worthy corporal continued to lecture me for some time, and he at last so effectually disgusted me with the Legion and everything belonging to it, that I at once took his

advice, and in that dark room wrote a letter to a friend in Paris, requesting him to call without delay on the General, explain to him my disagreeable position, and urge him to use his influence in having my name at once struck off the roll of the regiment. But whilst I was in the act of addressing my epistle, an orderly arrived from the office of the Etat Major, bearing with him the route paper for the volunteers who were to proceed to Corsica, and, to my horror, I found that we were to set sail for that island the very next morning in the steamer of Valery Frères There was now nothing left but to wait patiently until something could be done in my behalf; and sick at heart, I retired with the old corporal to a cabaret, and swilled bad brandy-and-water during the remainder of the evening. My introduction to French barrack life was thus commenced under the most unfavourable circumstances. No sleep visited my eyelids that blessed night; the heat and smell, combined with the snoring of my comrades, and the attacks of fleas innumerable, effectually prevented me enjoying that luxury; and I was wide-awake when the "*sous officier*," who was to conduct us to the boat, made his appearance with a lantern, and told the gallant Legionaries that it was time to rise. Although

reveillé had not sounded, everybody turned out—more, I imagine, in the hope of getting some liquor out of the Englishman than from any amusement they might derive from seeing a batch of volunteers marched off to Corsica. I did not disappoint them; and many were the good wishes that were showered upon me as I "fell in," and answered to my name, "Tapley, Marc"—a name I had almost forgotten, as the sergeant appeared to think—for he bawled it out three or four times before I responded, in a tone that would under different circumstances have earned him a good box on the ear. At length we were fairly off, and marching through the still-sleeping streets of Marseilles. Arrived at La Joliette, we found the little steamer that was to convey us to Corsica puffing and blowing, impatient of delay. One of my friends from the office came on board and inspected us—called me on one side, and telling me that no non-commissioned officer would accompany us, handed me the route paper, and thus put me in charge of about twenty as ill-looking ruffians as ever graced even Falstaff's ragged company. I felt very much ashamed of the command, and was infinitely relieved when the stern-rope was at length cast off, and we steamed slowly out of the harbour. It

was a lovely winter's morning, and the long line of the Provence coast stood out sharp and distinct against the deep blue sky; but alas! I was not in the mood to enjoy the beauties of Nature. As we passed underneath the hill on which stands the church of Notre Dame de la Garde, the bell commenced tolling in the most ominous manner, making me more miserable than ever; and when the gloomy walls of the Château d'If came in sight, I felt as if nothing were wanting to complete my utter desolation. I soon left my comrades to make themselves miserable in their own fashion, and went in search of the steward, who, ignorant of my true rank, immediately gave me the best berth in the vessel, into which I at once crept, in the hope of being able for a time to forget my troubles in sleep. I slept for some hours; when I awoke, I felt in better spirits, and as I knew that the truth would come out sooner or later, I at once made a clean breast of it, and told my fellow-passengers that I was neither more nor less than a private in the Foreign Legion on my way to join the regiment. Now, in dear old England, this would have been quite sufficient to have at once excluded me from the dinner-table; not so in France. Indeed, I think it rather

added to my popularity, for I received offers of assistance without number, and two or three hospitable Corsicans invited me to visit them the instant I could obtain my discharge from the Legion. In fact, the voyage turned out much pleasanter than I had anticipated. My squad of recruits gave me little or no trouble, quietly sleeping away the time, and eating and drinking what I gave them without asking any questions. It was not until the afternoon of the following day that we reached Ile Rousse, where I took leave of my friends and disembarked, according to the directions laid down in my route paper. On landing, we were met by a corporal belonging to our regiment, who marched us like a flock of sheep into a dilapidated building, where he told us to remain until he could procure our billets for the night; and here we shivered in unison for a couple of hours or more, when we were relieved by the appearance of an official bearing the desired documents. A rather decent fellow, a Pole, was, I found, to be billeted along with me, and we sallied forth together into the dark, ill-paved streets, to search for the house where we were to find our night's accommodation. It was only after repeated inquiries, which were not invariably answered, and several dangerous stumbles on dark, rickety stair-

cases, that we at length found the house in question. On knocking at the door, an old crone made her appearance, who, for downright hideousness, could not have been surpassed, and demanded in a shrill treble the cause of our intrusion at that hour of the night. On showing her the billet, and informing her in the politest manner that we were about to honour her with our company for the night, she burst into a perfect storm of abuse in some unknown tongue, and gave us to understand that she had not room to stow away a cat, much less a couple of rough foreign soldiers. Of course that was no affair of ours, for had not the paternal Government declared that she *had* the required accommodation? So I told the old beldame that if she did not find room for us instanter I would inform the prefect that she had refused to harbour us, and then, *mille tonnerres,* let her look out for squalls. I said this merely to frighten her ladyship, and pay her out for having called us a couple of roughs, for nothing on earth would have induced me to pass the night in the close, dirty, stinking room in which the whole family appeared to be domiciled. On hearing the prefect's dreaded name, her manner changed in an instant, and she meekly invited us to enter her den, an invitation which I did not think proper

to accept; so with a bitter malediction on Corsica and things Corsican, I again strode forth into the chill night air, this time to search for the corporal under whose orders we were, to see if I could not obtain his permission to pass the night at some inn, if there were such a thing to be found in the miserable town of Ile Rousse. It took us at least an hour to find his quarters, and then the poor fellow had to imbibe several glasses of *eau de vie* at my expense before he could be made to comprehend what it was that I desired, but he did ultimately accede to my request on the condition that my comrade and myself would both faithfully promise to be at the rendezvous at eight o'clock the next morning, at which hour we were to start for Calvi. The corporal, no doubt in anticipation of a supper, graciously offered to be our *cicerone*, and as I thought it best to be on good terms with my commanding officer for the time being, I jumped at his proposal and gave him *carte blanche* to order whatever luxuries the larder might contain. The *aubergiste*, after a word or two with our guide, was most civil, and prepared us an excellent supper, whilst the corporal proved himself a most jovial companion, and amused us with a humorous account of his adventures in the Legion. He was in no hurry

to go away, so there we sat before a blazing wood fire, drinking tumbler after tumbler of hot brandy-and-water, until, I am shocked to say, it was time for the corporal to look after the rest of his squad, and for us to breakfast prior to our departure. Punctually as the clock struck eight we marched out of Ile Rousse, M. le Caporal, the Pole, and myself walking together, the rest straggling about in twos and threes as they thought fit—all that was required of them being to remain within sight, and keep their hands from picking and stealing. We were in light marching order, the entire impedimenta of our party consisting of a very small valise, belonging to myself, which a hungry German volunteered to carry for a consideration, and the knapsack of M. le Caporal, which he carried himself, no one offering to relieve him of it.

CHAPTER V.

On the March—A Retrograde Movement—A crusty old Sergeant—*Barberous* Cruelty—A Rapid Metamorphosis—The Foreign Legion at Dinner—A Grateful Reminiscence—A Peep at the Interior of Corsica—Polenta—Corsican Firesides—Corté—The Efficacy of Tobacco—Qualifying for the Galleys—On Guard—A Decided Step—A Ray of Hope—Searching for a Substitute—Keen Bargaining—Free once more.

UNDER any other circumstances I should have enjoyed the walk exceedingly, for the day was lovely, and the scenery beautiful in the extreme. On our right, dancing in the bright sunshine, lay the sea, looking blue as the Mediterranean only can look, whilst the craggy snow-capped peaks in the centre of the island bounded the prospect on our left.

We did not hurry ourselves in the least; it was past noon when we at length arrived in Calvi, and I cannot say that the greeting we received on entering that ancient citadel was in the slightest degree cordial.

"What the deuce," demanded the grey-headed old captain who inspected us, "had we come to Calvi for? Why had we not gone to Bastia?

Right-about-face, back to Ile Rousse! double! march;" and, without deigning to utter another word, the old villain strode back into his gloomy quarters, leaving us standing like a lot of idiots in the barrack-square.

Of course his orders could not be disputed, so back we trotted to Ile Rousse, where I slept at the same hotel as on the previous night, and took leave of my friend the corporal, who, much to my regret, had received orders to hand us over to the care of a crusty old sergeant, who at once took an inveterate dislike to me simply because I happened to be an Englishman, and who lost no opportunity of annoying me in the most spiteful manner. The journey to Bastia took two days, and we passed the first night at St. Florent. How those two days passed over I have not the slightest recollection. The brute of a sergeant separated me from my Pole out of sheer spite, and made me walk between two rascally-looking Italians, who, I am sure, had only just escaped from the galleys. He would not even allow me to enter an inn, nor halt for a drink on the road, and when we arrived at St. Florent, he made me sleep at my billet—a wretched hovel, where goats, fowls, vermin, and dark-skinned Corsican savages were mingled indiscriminately together. I am

truly thankful to say that I managed to keep my wrath down, and reached Bastia without having murdered the sergeant, which I frequently felt inclined to do, and I at once became part and portion of my distinguished regiment. I found to my relief that all the non-commissioned officers were not like my late tyrant, and with the aid of a few judiciously applied glasses of brandy, I soon managed to make friends. But friendship, alas! did me but little good, for the morning after my arrival my troubles recommenced. Hardly was I out of bed when I was pounced upon by the regimental barber, who, despite my piteous entreaties that he would leave me just a little beard, with one fell sweep of his razor deprived me of my cherished auburn whiskers, and clipped away at my already closely-cropped hair until I was as bare as a rat, and twice as ugly. When I had summoned sufficient courage to look at myself in the glass, oh! what a falling off was there! My own mother would not have known me; in fact, I hardly recognised myself. But that they had left me my moustache, I might have passed muster in London for a pugilist, or "dawg"-fancier; and it was with a sardonic grin that I complimented the barber on his skill, and promised to recommend him to my future

friends, the galley-slaves, in whose ranks I felt assured I should be found before many days were over. After breakfast, which consisted of a piece of dry bread and a mouthful of water, we were marched down to the Government stores to be measured (?) for our uniforms, and I must candidly admit that in my journey through life I have occasionally met with tailors who took more pains about the fit of my clothes than did my military outfitters at Bastia. With one cast of his eye, the quartermaster-sergeant decided what sized clothes I required, and in a twinkling I was metamorphosed into a newly-fledged French soldier. A plain red cap, with 2me in brass on the band, replaced my glossy Lincoln and Bennett; a coarse blue cotton handkerchief my elaborately-worked scarf; rough red trousers and a long grey-blue coat adorned the person of him who, but a moment before, had stood up in all the pride of "Hill's" best broadcloth, and vile ankle-jacks and leather gaiters encased the feet which had hitherto luxuriated in Chautaume's softest Bordeaux calf. And was it for this, O Marc Hercule Tapley, I inwardly groaned, that you left your comfortable shooting quarters, and crossed the wide Atlantic? Was it to be insulted by a beggarly French sergeant, cropped like Jack

Sheppard, and dressed in all the colours of a red-legged partridge, that you tore yourself away from the substantial comforts of London, and the *laissez-aller* life of sparkling Paris? Oh, wretched fate!—oh, miserable finale to all thy dreams of military glory!—and, overwhelmed with despair, I could, like another Esau, have lifted up my voice and wept. But I felt that the eyes of the terrible *sergent costumier* were upon me, and I rushed from his presence to hide my grief in a dark corner of my gloomy barrack-room. My fellow-soldiers, seeing me in such low spirits, had the good taste to leave me alone, and only roused me when dinner was ready. Dinner! I saw no preparations for that meal—no cloth, no plates, not even a table—nothing save four ravenous-looking men, each with a spoon and a lump of bread in his paw, all intently watching the door of our barrack-room in breathless anxiety. As minute after minute passed away without any dinner making its appearance, they grew excessively excited; and when at length the sixth occupant of the room entered, bearing in his arms a large earthenware pan, I thought they would all have gone out of their senses.

"Come, then, Englishman," they cried, in a

breath, as they crowded round the pipkin-bearer, "dinner! dinner!! dinner!!!

"What, was this our dinner?"

"But certainly; come along if you want to have any."

And, squatting on their haunches round the pan, which was placed in the middle of the room on the floor, they smacked their chops and prepared for action.

To their intense delight, I declined to participate in the contents of the dish. Poor devils! an extra portion of food did not fall to their lot every day, and they were fully alive to their good fortune.

I contented myself with watching them eat, and certainly no lion-feeding at the Zoological Gardens ever amused me one-half as much. The pan was filled with an extraordinary compound of meat, potatoes, and rice boiled in a sufficient quantity of water to give it the consistency of pea-soup. I have said there was some meat, and so there was. Six small pieces of salt pork, each about the size of a walnut, were successively fished out from the depths of the steaming mess, and carefully deposited by the respective proprietors on his piece of bread, to be eaten as a *bonne bouche* at the conclusion of the repast; and this done, the lance-corporal of the room plunged

his spoon deep into the mess, and took the first mouthful. Each man in rotation did the same, picking out as best he could the largest morsels, until nothing remained at the bottom of the pan but my piece of meat, for the possession of which they agreed to draw lots. If it had been an ingot of gold there could not have been more squabbling over it, and the fortunate winner at once became an object on which eight envious hungry eyes were centred. But a liberal distribution of tobacco soon made them all happy again, and leaving them to their pipes I strolled out to see if it were not possible to obtain in the town of Bastia a dinner more suited to an English stomach than the coosh-cou-soo of a French soldier. I found that at the Hôtel Guitton all my wants could be satisfied, and the landlord thereof guaranteed to supply me during my sojourn in Bastia with everything that my soul could desire, for the paltry consideration of five francs per diem. Most faithfully, O Guitton, didst thou fulfil that promise; and shouldst thou ever chance to read these lines, which is improbable, since thou understandest not a word of English, allow me now, after the lapse of eight years or more, to thank thee for the care thou tookest of an unhappy Englishman, when, for his sins, he

was doomed to undergo two months' martyrdom in the "2me Régiment de la Légion Etrangère." Art thou still alive, my friend, and do the officers of the garrison still play piquet from morning till night, and spend their ten sous per diem in thy comfortable café? Are thy "merles de la Corse" as plump, and thy "grives" as juicy as when I first had the good fortune to enter thy hospitable door? May thy shadow never grow less, thou best and most attentive of landlords, and may the name of thy *chef*, to whom my mind oft reverts when suffering from the effects of an ill-cooked dinner in my native land, become a household word in Corsican kitchens!

But to continue my story, I found, on returning to the barracks, that all my arrangements were destined to be nipped in the bud, the recruits having received orders to be ready in three days' time to march for Corté, where they were to be drilled previous to their departure for the Crimea.

"Corté—but where was Corté?"

"Oh, a miserable town situated amongst the mountains, in the centre of the island, where there was a citadel, in which a portion of the legion was always quartered."

My heart sank within me. Bastia was bad enough, but it was at all events head-quarters,

and the town itself was endurable; but once safely in Corté, and how should I ever be able to exist, or interest the military authorities in my behalf! Things appeared to grow worse instead of better, and I was so completely upset, that I felt unable to make a move of any description. So the three days passed away without my having made a single attempt to avert my impending fate, and nothing remained but either to mutiny and take the consequences, or to march quietly with the others to Corté. I decided upon the latter course as the more sensible of the two, and with a sorrowful heart left Bastia, and the Hôtel Giutton, for the wild region of central Corsica.

Being now in full uniform, the sergeant in command obliged the recruits to march in something like military order, making an exception in my favour, and allowing me to walk with him in the rear of the squad. The first part of our road lay through a flat, fenny country, bordering the sea, and particularly uninteresting. The eternal mountains were, however, in front of us—they always are in Corsica—but before we reached them, the sergeant turned off the high road, and led us by a narrow bridle-path to a small village; there he informed us we were to halt; our first *étape* being a short one, not more

20267

than twenty kilometres, or twelve miles at the outside. The said village proved, like most other Corsican villages, to be merely a collection of miserable hovels, inhabited by a lot of squalid, poverty-stricken savages, who glared at us from underneath their black shaggy eyebrows in the most diabolical manner. Nothing in the shape of a decent house was to be seen, so our sergeant, the Pole, and myself, had to take up our quarters in a large unfurnished loft, on the dirty floor of which the villagers were in the habit of drying their chestnut crops. I have often wondered what the wretched Corsicans would do without the chestnut tree. It is to them what rice is to the Oriental, oatmeal to the Scotch, and the potato to the Irish. It is his staff of life; without it I verily believe he would starve; and a good chestnut year is as much a cause for rejoicing in Corsica as is an abundant olive crop in the south of France. The chestnuts are carefully picked, and the husks removed, when they are spread out in the sun, or on a loft, and dried, until they become as hard as brickbats; they are then ground into flour, which in its turn is converted into a sort of cake, in colour and weight resembling lead; and this delectable compound is eaten with great relish by the natives under the name of "polenta."

I enjoyed anything but a good night's rest in the miserable loft, and was truly thankful when the morning came, and it was time to bid adieu to the dirty village, and its still dirtier inhabitants. We started at daybreak, and soon left the flat country through which we had journeyed the previous day, and began to ascend the mountains. The road was in splendid order, as are all the main roads throughout the island, and the scenery was magnificent.

A rapid mountain torrent, the waters of which were of the loveliest aquamarine tint, dashed and foamed beneath us, whilst on either side of the defile through which our road wound, the hills rose precipitately, lofty mountains, the home of the mouflon and wild boar, looming behind them in the distance, forming altogether a *coup d'œil* which, even in Connemara, I have never seen surpassed. Agriculture was not in a forward state, and the dwarf arbutus, and similar stunted evergreens, luxuriated in spots where, in other lands inhabited by a more thrifty race than the Corsicans, patches of oats and barley would have been planted. The aspect of the country grew wilder and wilder as we advanced into the interior, and the cabins of the inhabitants would have made even Paddy stare. The Corsicans appear to regard chimneys

as superfluities, for whenever I entered their doors to obtain a light, I was invariably blinded with the dense smoke from the green wood which they burn instead of more seasoned timber, probably because it lasts longer, and they are too lazy to cut sufficient to last for any length of time. We passed the second night at another miserable village, the sole occupation of whose inhabitants appeared to consist in watching for the diligences, and seeing them change horses, or rather mules, for mules are the order of the day in Corsica; but there being a gendarmerie barrack in the village, we were better lodged than on the previous night, and on the following evening we arrived safely in Corté, after marching six hours in a soaking rain.

The general aspect of the town was not cheering, and Pascal Paoli, although a patriot of the purest water, might I think, have selected a pleasanter place of residence. Corté is surrounded by mountains, and on an eminence overlooking the town stands the weather-beaten old citadel, which, after the bullet-riddled house of Paoli, is the chief object of interest. We arrived just in time to see four unhappy defaulters marched into the "*Salle 'de Police,*" a circumstance which I looked upon as an evil omen, and I trembled

when I thought that, before many days were over, I likewise might become an inmate of that gloomy guard-room. The Pole, whom I now looked upon as a sort of friend and companion in misfortune, and myself, were, through the kind offices of the sergeant, separated from the other recruits, and lodged in a room with six old soldiers—that is to say, old for the Legion, the gallant *Legionaires* in time of war not being often given the chance of growing grey in the service—and I soon managed to ingratiate myself with them—no difficult matter in a community where men receive but three sous a day, and amongst whom the breaking of a clay pipe was regarded as an irreparable calamity. My. advent in their room was considered to be a rare piece of good luck by the occupants, and great was the jealousy of the outsiders, more especially when it became whispered in the corridors that the English recruit in No. — had actually promised to supply his room-mates with tobacco, a piece of extravagance without precedent in the annals of the Legion. The services of every man in the room were placed at my disposal; one promised to clean my accoutrements, another to run my errands, a third to do my *corvées* (fatigues), whilst all volunteered to teach me my drill. In fact, I was a

very great man in a small way, and ought, no doubt, to have felt excessively proud of the interest which was taken in my welfare; but alas! I failed to appreciate the kind attentions that were shown me, and heartily wished the Legion at the devil, and myself back again in Old England. And so I waited, and waited, and waited, hoping against hope that each post would bring me my discharge, or, at all events, that I would be allowed the alternative of finding a substitute, but no such document made its appearance, and I began at length to fear that my friends had completely forgotten me, and that I would, after all, be obliged to embark for the Crimea.

Each day there was the same dull routine of duty. Reveillé sounded before daybreak, and whilst my comrades performed their various *corvées* I used to prepare my breakfast in the sergeant's room, for the use of whose stove I gave one half of whatever edibles and drinkables my slave, the Pole, might have provided for that meal. After breakfast came drill, and after drill I used to walk down to the little hotel, and read my own particular paper in the café belonging to the establishment. The officers of my regiment

frequented the same hostelry, and would, no doubt, have patronized me had I desired it. But I did not; I hated the very sight of them, and sat down, without opening my lips to a soul, in the most retired corner, until it was time for roll-call. Afternoon drill over, the remainder of the evening was pretty well at my own disposal, and about five o'clock I was accustomed to return to the inn, where I dined in solitary state, unless, indeed, I happened to have invited some lucky comrade to dinner, which I only did on three or four occasions during my stay in Corté. I occasionally managed to obtain permission to remain out of quarters until the advanced hour of ten o'clock, and on such occasions I would repair to an obscure cabaret near the citadel, frequented by dark-skinned mountaineers, and some of the worst characters in our regiment; and I only wish I had the pen of a Dickens to describe the various amiable peculiarities of the gentlemen whose acquaintance I had the honour of making in that smoke-blackened room. Why I frequented this particular cabaret I cannot now recollect; but I think it must have been in order to qualify myself for the galleys, where, as I have already said, I expected ultimately to be sent for

some breach of discipline; and if this were really the case, I could not have found a better school had I searched the world over.

During the memorable period when I wore the red breeches, I luckily mounted guard but three times, and had I again been obliged to do duty, I think I must have "caved in." The guard for which I was told off, did duty at the upper guard-house, which was perched on the highest point of the rock on which stood the citadel of Corté. The guard-room smoked so dreadfully, that with the tears streaming from my eyes, I was forced to rush into the open air to avoid suffocation, for my lungs and eyes were unfortunately unused to the dense smoky atmosphere which, from habit, my comrades appeared to like rather than otherwise. Outside, the weather was intensely cold, and the bitter night wind, laden with driving hail from the snow-clad mountains, howled round our rocky keep, chilling me to the very bone; for the French Government, with a view, no doubt, to make the Legionaries a hardy lot, only supplied us with a great-coat when actually on duty, the brown capote belonging to the box, and not to the sentry. With me it was either suffocation or congelation. I chose the latter alternative, and when not doing "sentry-go,"

rather than again enter the guard-room, I lay down on a bench, which I placed against the lee-wall of the building, and shivered myself to sleep. I wonder I was not frozen to death. I thought the misery of those nights could not have been surpassed; but since then, woe is me! I have had reason to alter my opinion. After the guards, my "*corvées du bois*," which I could not do by deputy, were my greatest sources of annoyance. Some twenty of us used to start at daybreak to fetch wood from a neighbouring mountain, and each man was obliged to produce on his return a log weighing a certain number of kilos, or take up his abode in the guard-room. Our march to the mountain in the bitter morning air was bad enough, collecting the frozen wood worse; but the march back, with a heavy log on one's shoulder, was the most infernal part of the whole proceeding, and attended with not a little danger. The sides of the mountain being encrusted with ice, my feet, notwithstanding the cautious manner in which I trod, would occasionally slip from under me, and down I would shoot some thirty yards or more, pursued by the log, which would, had it struck me, have dislocated my shoulder to a certainty.

I managed, however, to escape dislocations,

compound fractures, suffocation, and, above all, the dreaded guard-room ; and so six weeks passed away. During that time I received no communication of any description relative to my discharge, and the time fast approached when it was probable that a draught would be sent to the Crimea, for our wounded Legionaries were returning, and by their account, our regiment having as usual the honour of being always in the van on any dangerous expedition, had been decimated on several occasions. There was evidently no time to be lost, if I desired to escape the fate of my comrades, for I already knew my drill, and would, therefore, be amongst the first to be sent to the seat of war. So, as no one interfered in my behalf, I determined at once to act for myself. My first step was to explain my position to the captain of my company—not a bad sort of fellow in his way—and beg of him to obtain for me from the officer commanding at Corté five days' leave to proceed to Bastia on "urgent private affairs," as the officers used to say in the Crimea. The gallant captain evidently did not want me to leave his company, for he tried to keep me in the regiment by assuring me that if I only did my duty as a soldier, I would get my epaulette before the conclusion of the war—a

tempting bait, certainly. I did not insult the gentleman by telling him that I would prefer a broom and a crossing in London; but I thought it, and persisted in urging my request in the most respectful manner, and the upshot was, that although against all French military regulations, I did ultimately obtain the leave I required. I returned to Bastia by diligence, and after the lapse of six weeks found myself once more in the Hôtel Guitton. The morning after my arrival, I presented myself at the house of the English Consul, and requested him to obtain me an audience of the General commanding at Bastia, as being the only man on the island from whom I could obtain permission to leave the regiment. This, my friend Mr. Pennington readily consented to do, and that very evening I again found myself in the presence of a live French General. My tale was soon told. I had joined the French army, because I desired to serve in the Crimea; but that (I hope the recording angel did not register this lie against me) since my arrival in Corsica, a near relative, whose executor I was, had died suddenly, and it was therefore imperative that I should return immediately to England. That I had already written to my friend General ——, in Paris (I laid great stress on the General,

for he was senior to my Corsican friend), but that I feared my letter had miscarried, and that I had therefore taken the liberty of demanding an interview, to beg of him to give me permission to leave the regiment. The General was most civil. "It was," he said, "time of war," but he would, under the circumstances, give me the permission I required, provided I could obtain a substitute; if I could not, I would have to return to my regiment. After having said which, he waved his hand, and I had nothing left but to bow myself out of his august presence. On returning to the hotel, I consulted my friend Guitton as to the manner in which I should proceed, in order to obtain an individual to take my place in the ranks of the Legion. He assured me that there would not be the slightest difficulty, and volunteered to accompany me to the barracks, where we could make the necessary inquiries respecting the men whose term of service had nearly expired, and quietly agree with the most reasonable of them regarding the price to be paid for replacing me in the regiment. It was too late to commence our hunt after substitutes that night, but early on the following morning we began to search Bastia high and low for a time-expired soldier. We had, however, no success; and evening came, and not

a soul could be found for love or money to take my place in the Legion. In a fortnight or a month there would be plenty of men only too happy to jump at my offer of a thousand francs, and re-enlist for four years and ten months—my unexpired term of service—but at that particular moment there was not, I was informed, a single man in the Legion who could claim his discharge. What was to be done? In a month's time I might be on my way to the Crimea; or even if I were not, it would be impossible for me again to obtain a single day's leave of absence. I was in a dreadful "fix," and Guitton advised me to go quietly on board a steamer which was to sail that night for Leghorn, and send the General and his subordinates to Tophet. But this I resolutely refused to do; rather than desert my colours in time of war, I would go to the Crimea and share the fate of my wretched comrades. So I spent the following day in endeavouring to find some civilian willing to enlist in the Legion, trusting that the General would under the circumstances accept a recruit in my place. But although I offered two thousand francs not a man was forthcoming, for poor as were the men to whom I held out this tempting bait—a small fortune for a Corsican—not one was there to be found so

poor as to enter the detested Legion on any consideration whatsoever. There was but a single chance left: it was just within the limits of possibility that a substitute might be found at Ajaccio, and thither I determined to proceed without one moment's delay. I had taken my seat in the diligence, we had, in fact, started, when I caught sight of a soldier rushing down the street after us, waving his hand for us to stop.

"Well, what in heaven's name is up now?" I demanded, fully expecting to hear that he had been sent down to prevent my departure.

"All right, Englishman," he replied, "make haste, get out of the diligence; you have no occasion to go to Ajaccio; we've found a tailor in the government stores whose time will be up to-morrow, and who is willing to take your place for a fair amount of money."

I could have fallen on the neck of my ugly Teutonic comrade, and kissed him in true Corsican fashion. Could it possibly be true? Had fortune at length ceased from persecuting me, and was I after all to escape from the Legion? I flew down to the *cabaret* where the tailor and his advisers were awaiting me, and over a bottle of the host's best brandy bargained about the amount I was to pay my *remplaçant* for another five years' ser-

vice in the Legion. My tailoring friend had evidently been informed of the disagreeable position in which I was placed, and how determined I was to get clear of the Legion at any price, for his demands were perfectly outrageous. He opened the meeting by modestly assuring me that both his friends and himself had agreed that four thousand francs was the price at which his services should be valued, and that he was determined not to take one fraction less.

"Four thousand francs!" I indignantly exclaimed. "Sooner than pay that exorbitant demand for your precious carcass, I would volunteer for the Crimea to-morrow. Who the deuce do you take me for, that I should be able to raise four thousand francs at a moment's notice in a poverty-stricken town like Bastia? I might possibly be able to obtain a sum of twelve hundred francs, and not a centime more would I give, even though I were obliged to return to Corté in the morning."

My liberal proposal was received with a howl of derision by Master Snip and his friends. "Brigand that I was, I had already," they said, "offered a sum of two thousand francs for a civilian, who would, in all probability, have been rejected as a substitute; and yet I could only afford

to pay twelve hundred francs for an old soldier, about whose eligibility there could not be the smallest doubt. Had I no shame? or did I desire to cheat a poor soldier out of a few hardly-earned francs?"

It was no go; I was not to be humbugged, and as neither party would yield an inch, it was finally agreed that I should find some disinterested person to act as my deputy; that the tailor should appoint another, and that we should be bound to abide by their decision. I chose a shrewd little marble polisher as my representative, whilst the tailor, with admirable tact, asked the landlord to undertake his case: a proposal to which that worthy, with an eye no doubt to the future custom of his client, readily consented.

Our host then, on behalf of the tailor, urged that four thousand francs was by no means an exorbitant demand, when it was taken into consideration that our regiment was at that moment on active service, and had already been decimated in more than one engagement. That, in fact, the life of a Legionaire was held on such very precarious terms, that it was dubious whether his unfortunate client would ever live to enjoy the money he would derive from his rash bargain. That whilst his client was a poor devil, who only wanted the four thousand francs to send to his mother, who was a

widow, I was an Englishman, enormously rich—a millionaire, perfectly able to pay forty thousand francs—aye, four hundred thousand—if it were necessary; and overcome, apparently, by the magnitude of the sum he had mentioned, he paused and gasped for breath. "It is well known," he continued, "that no later than yesterday M. Tapley offered two thousand francs for any civilian who would volunteer to take his place. Why should an old soldier receive less? Had M. Tapley changed his mind, and did he now desire to leave his bones in the Crimea, or, perhaps, return, if fortunate, with only the loss of a leg and an arm, as would in all probability be the case with his unhappy client?" He concluded, amidst great applause from his side of the house, and I began to tremble for my four thousand francs. My worthy lapidary, however, soon changed the aspect of affairs, and I began to breathe again.

"The landlord's speech wanted," he said, "only one thing—a mere bagatelle, it was true —to make it sublime: the little thing that was wanting being simply veracity. The landlord had made four statements, which, as my champion, he begged in the politest manner to contradict. Firstly, that four thousand francs was a moderate demand; secondly, that his client would send the

amount he received to his mother, a widow; thirdly, that his esteemed friend, M. Tapley, was a millionaire; and, fourthly, that the tailor ran great risk of losing his life in battle, should he eventually agree to complete my term of service in the Legion. To commence with the amount demanded, four thousand francs: he defied any one to prove that even one half that sum had ever been paid in the Legion for a substitute; perhaps not more than a third of it; and as for sending the whole amount to his mother to keep for him, that was simply gammon, thrown out with a view to soften our hearts; for the tailor's mother had been dead for years, and he had often stated that he had not a relative in the world, so that he could only spend the money on himself; and if he but frequented his (the landlord's) *cabaret*, and drank his vile brandy, he would be a dead man before even five hundred francs were expended. Again, his friend, M. Tapley, was by no means a wealthy man: far from it. He could at that moment only manage to obtain some sixteen hundred francs, and he of course required something to be going on with until he could obtain letters of credit from England. Lastly, the tailor knew very well that he was too good a workman to be turned away from the government stores, and that, there-

fore, he did not run the slightest risk of being sent to the Crimea. It was true that on the previous day his client had foolishly offered two thousand francs for a substitute, but he was at that moment unaware that there would be plenty of time-expired men in a month or so who would only be too happy to take anything he might choose to offer them, and he concluded by again tendering twelve hundred francs. This was indignantly refused, and there was a regular row, which continued for upwards of an hour, when, both parties being thoroughly exhausted, a compromise was effected, and it was agreed that I should pay fifteen hundred francs, and provide a dinner for Snip and his six friends. I was only too glad to be let off so easily, and at once gave the landlord *carte blanche* for the dinner, and, whilst it was preparing, I started off to my banker's to inquire how much money there was still to my credit in his *caisse*. To my great joy I found that there was not only sufficient to pay my substitute, but a few hundred francs surplus; so my mind being at ease on that score, I returned to the *cabaret* to do the honours of the table. The feast passed off most satisfactorily, everybody drank everybody else's health, speeches were made, glasses clinked, and the utmost good-fellowship prevailed. I was in good

humour because I was about to get clear of the regiment; the tailor, because he had fifteen hundred francs to receive; and the others, because they were indulging in a dinner and any amount of liquor at my expense. I must however say, in justice to the Legionaires, that when they left the *cabaret* to return to their quarters, there was not a single man the worse for liquor amongst the party. I wonder whether such would have been the case if they had been English soldiers! The next day my substitute was formally re-enlisted in the Legion for a four years and ten months servitude and the fifteen hundred francs paid over to him. I was not, however, altogether clear of the service, for I was obliged to return once more to Corté to deliver up my arms and accoutrements, but that done, I was again a free agent, and no longer a member of the gallant "2^{me} Régiment de la Légion Etrangère." How shall I describe my sensations when I put off my by no means elegant uniform, and once again dressed myself in the garb of a gentleman! They are past description; suffice it to say that I did, on one occasion, again don the blue-gray coat and red breeches, but it was for a masquerade ball; and I can safely affirm that I looked a

greater guy than any person in that crowded ball-room. The Foreign Legion has, I believe, been disbanded, and I must say that I do not think that the French army has lost much by dispensing with the services of the gentlemen who composed that most distinguished corps.

Ex-gentlemen of the Legion, I salute you. Be consoled by the reflection that in case of war ungrateful France may again require your valuable assistance, and revenge yourselves by refusing her aid in her hour of need. A late comrade, Marc Hercule Tapley, who has been led to see the errors of his ways, offers up his prayers daily for your conversion. Who knows but that they may be one day answered? My friends of the Legion, a long adieu!

Before leaving Corsica I made a pedestrian tour of the island, and saw some magnificently wild scenery in the remoter districts. My departure was most sudden. I was patiently awaiting a government permit to take a week's shooting amongst the mountains in the interior (for in Corsica no one can hunt, or even carry a gun, without an especial order), when one fine morning I unfortunately interfered with an amiable mountaineer, who was amusing himself by attempting to

murder his wife. He swore vengeance, and my friends insisted upon my at once leaving the island, as a Corsican *vendetta* is not easily evaded.

That same evening I went on board the Marseilles steamer, turned at once into my berth, and when I awoke the next morning, the mountains of Corsica had been long lost to view.

CHAPTER VI.

Bohemians, and their Ways in Paris—Les Flaneurs de Paris—Good Resolutions—The Man who Hesitates is Lost—A Strange Stock-Exchange Barometer—The Crédit Mobilier—A Speculator's Method of Reasoning—Buying Experience—English Folk abroad—French and Russian Politeness compared—A French Woman at her Toilet—Little Gauls and their ways in Paris—Parisian Hospitality—French Homes—Concerning certain extravagant Persons—Sham Don Juans.

IF the little knowledge of men, women, and things in general which I possess had been altogether acquired amongst French soldiers, Yankee sailors, and such like unaristocratic gentry, what a one-sided and erroneous opinion I should in all probability have formed of this pleasant world of ours! Luckily for me, however, my lines have occasionally been cast in pleasanter places than in the holds of whalers and the mountain fastnesses of uncivilized islands. I have seen what is called "life" in all its phases, and amongst other things, I have had the honour of being a whilom member of that world-renowned, if not exactly moral fraternity, *Les Flaneurs de Paris.*

Prior to joining that distinguished body I did my best to qualify myself for their agreeable society by leading the life of a Bohemian in the classic Quartier Latin, where I occupied rooms in the Hotel Corneille, not far from the Luxembourg; and if in those days I fared less luxuriously than I did at a later period in the Quartier St. Honoré, I enjoyed myself none the less for all that. My everyday life differed in no wise from that led by Bohemians generally: a desultory existence which has been admirably described by Paul de Kock and a host of other French novelists. There were little *parties fines* to *Scéaux*, where, amidst the branches of that famous tree at "Robinson's," so dear to all the birds of the Bohemian feather, dinner would be served *al fresco*, and the songs of Béranger warbled to a not inharmonious accompaniment of rustling leaves and tinkling wine-glasses. Then there would be frequent visits to the Closerie des Lilas, or the Prado d'Eté, in the summer, and to the Salle Valentino, or, if money were plentiful, to the more brilliant *bal masqué de l'opéra* in the winter, where a party of us, dressed in the most outrageous costumes, would form our own quadrilles, and dance the *cancan* to our hearts' content, whenever the eyes of *MM. les gensdarmes* might happen to be

turned the other way. If our purses were not sufficiently well lined to justify the extravagance of suppers at the Maison Dorée or the Café Anglais, the doors of many a snug little restaurant were open to us in our own vagabond quarter, where our uproarious mirth did not attract the same amount of attention that it would have done had we been seated in a *cabinet particulier*, overlooking the boulevards, nor subject us to the annoyance of an untimely visit from the police authorities. And what pleasant little suppers those were! How excellent did the *vieux Macon à deux francs* and the *bif steck aux pommes* taste to our unvitiated palates, and what charms did not Adèle or Cecile possess in our inexperienced eyes! In fact, to use the words of the poet, *Comme on est bien dans un grenier à vingt ans.* And better than all, my pleasures were not alloyed by that disagreeable sensation which one experiences when living beyond one's means. As a denizen of the Quartier Latin, I never outran the constable, my expenses being regulated and my weekly estimates strictly kept by the most charming and managing of accountants; and if we committed a piece of extravagance to-day, there was sure to be retrenchment on the morrow. Alas for the Bohemian race, that pearl of great price, a

disinterested *ménagère*, is no longer to be found in the Quartier Latin, nor, indeed, in any other part of Paris. The race of *grisettes*, in whose praise poets have sung and novelists written, has disappeared in that vortex of extravagant dissipation which came in with the Empire, and the thrifty piquante *grisette* of former days is now the harpy of the Quartier Breda, or the bepainted *lorette* of the Jardin Mabille.

But it is of the Quartier St. Honoré, and not of the Quartier Latin, that I am about to write, so let me hasten away to the other side of the Seine, and transport my reader from the Hotel Corneille, and its Bohemian occupants, to a more extravagant establishment in the Rue Castiglione, where *flânerie*, and not Bohemianism, is the order of the day.

Most virtuous, oh Mark! were the resolutions thou formedst on removing thy household gods to that pleasant hostelry, most praiseworthy thy determination to live as economically as a Parisian atmosphere and a Bohemian education would permit thee; but alas! that it should be so—most unsatisfactory was the . . . . . Yes, conscience, it is but too true. Before one short week was over, all my wise resolutions were scattered to the winds, and the rudderless bark of poor M. T. was rapidly

gliding down that smooth stream of extravagant dissipation, whose waters empty themselves into a certain fathomless pit in the Rue de Clichy.

And what was it that sent me thus drifting away in the direction of that dark and dreary abyss? It was that foolish vanity which has before now ruined many a better man than myself—the vanity of endeavouring to appear in the eyes of the world, what I knew in my heart I was not—a man of fortune. In the Quartier Latin, where, if a man has a hundred francs in his pocket, he is passing rich, I had always been looked upon as a sort of Crœsus, and had been flattered and admired accordingly. But what was wealth in the Quartier Latin was downright penury in the Quartier St. Honoré, where men of fortune were as plentiful as blackberries; and to shine even as a lesser planet, I saw at once that my expenses would have to be increased ten-fold, at the least calculation. If I hesitated, it was but for a moment, having fully made up my mind that there was but one thing worth living for—pleasure; and that Paris was the only city where it could be had in perfection. I found no difficulty in framing a hundred excuses for my extravagance. The knowledge of the world that I would pick up during my residence in Paris would, I

thought, be of immense service to me in after life, whilst the acquaintances I formed in my palmy days would be just the men to obtain me some sinecure, should I ever experience a reverse of fortune; and, happy inspiration! was there not the Bourse, on which fortunes were to be made without the slightest difficulty? Of course there was! So, buoyant with the hope of being able to make up for my increased expenditure by happy speculations in the share market, I at once topped my boom, and without a single misgiving for the future got quickly under way.

What a howling swell I thought myself, as in my span new phaeton I drove up the Champs Elysées, and how satisfied I felt that such another turnout was not to be found in the Bois! Some might certainly have finer horses, and others handsomer carriages and appointments, but the *tout ensemble* of my equipage was, without doubt, the very acme of perfection; at least, so I thought, and so, I firmly believe, think ninety-nine men out of a hundred, who own a mail phaeton, and a pair of high stepping horses, for the first time.

Perched on a high driving-box, with legs stretched well forward, and whip held in true coachy fashion, I never felt tired of exhibiting myself to the fashionable world, and would drive

daily round and round the lake, in the full assurance that the eyes of all, from the Emperor downwards, were upon me. Blessed, happy ignorance of early manhood, too soon, alas! to be dissipated by contact with the world. Little did I then imagine what experience has since taught me—that in this world men are too much occupied in ruminating on the appearance which they themselves present, to be able to spare more than a passing thought for the appearance of others.

On returning to my hotel I used generally to saunter as far as the Café du Cardinal, at the corner of the Rue Richelieu, there to await the appearance of the little old lady who sold the *Cours de la Bourse*, or the slip of paper on which were printed the prices current of that day's share market. After a short time I could almost have dispensed with her ladyship altogether; for I found that the coffee was a sort of money-market barometer on which I could depend, Charles, the decoctor, a speculator like myself, making pretty good coffee when there was a *hausse*, and execrable stuff whenever there unfortunately happened to be a *baisse*. Charles, however, if I mistake not, confined himself to dabbling in the funds, whilst I from first to last had a turn at all sorts of speculations, from gas companies to the inevitable Crédit Mobilier.

The shares of the Crédit Mobilier at the time of which I am writing were eagerly inquired after by all sorts and conditions of men, much in the same way as were those of the South Sea scheme in the reign of Queen Anne. The count in his luxurious hotel and the chiffonier in his miserable garret, the duchess in her boudoir and the *lorette au troisième* in the Rue Blanche, were all gone Crédit Mobilier mad, but held at least one idea in common,—that purchasing Mobilier shares was one way of making money, let the other be what it might. The manner in which those shares fluctuated was astounding; and there was just as much risk and excitement in purchasing them for the account as there would have been had the money been staked at chicken hazard or fly loo. There can be no doubt that the editors of the daily papers lost little by inserting from time to time paragraphs such as the following in their column of *Faits Divers*, and that the great Crédit Mobilier shareholders took precious good care to lose even less; whilst the poor *gobemouches*, always ready to give credence to the falsest rumours, and led away by such paragraphs as those in question, were constantly buying and selling at the wrong times, thus transferring their money in the simplest manner to those wide-awake gentle-

men who had the opportunity of always being kept *au courant des affaires* :—

"We (*Menteur du Soir*) are happy to be able to inform our readers that the Crédit Mobilier has successfully negotiated the Cannibal Island loan, so that a rise in the value of the shares of that flourishing Company may confidently be expected;" and the *Menteur* would generally be right. Up would go the shares like skyrockets, and they would retain their fictitious value until the large speculators had disposed of their surplus stock, when a second paragraph in the *Menteur*, to the effect that the Cannibal Island loan had *not* been negotiated, would send them down again to a price at which it was safe to buy. This little game was successfully carried on for some time, for, although it was pretty certain that everyone was not a winner, the losers kept discreetly out of sight, and no one appeared in the slightest degree alarmed at the sudden fluctuations which took place. I, for my own part, had nothing to grumble at. If my Ouest Suisses went down, my Victor Emanuels went up, and, although I got a little shake in the Compagnie Maritime, a happy speculation in the Chemin de Fer du Nord set me on my legs again. But in the Crédit Mobilier I was so uniformly fortunate that I at length began to

regard the bureau of that Company in the Place Vendôme as a sort of bank upon which I had an unlimited credit. Little did it matter to me whether my original capital increased or diminished, so long as such a mine of Golconda was at hand. "One lucky *coup* in Mobiliers, Mark," I would say to myself, after committing some gross piece of extravagance, "will more than balance your accounts," and Mark's accounts used to be balanced accordingly; and so with implicit faith in M. Pereire and his colleagues, and without a care for the morrow, I sailed merrily along, tasting every pleasure which the gayest city in the world could yield or money purchase. Instead of *parties fines* to Scéaux and suppers at restaurants unknown to fame, there were excursions to Versailles or St. Germain, and dinners at Philippe's, Vefour's, or the Café Anglais. It was generally poor Mark who had to pay the piper on these occasions; but then, was there not the Crédit Mobilier ready to reimburse him for the expenditure? So that one may say it cost him nothing after all. Every man has to buy his experience, and I bought mine: in a dear market, it is true, but a pleasant one. If I paid for the dinners, I at least learned how to order them; and if Mesdames Constance and Hyacinthe had rather more extra-

vagant tastes than their sisters in the Quartier Latin, they spoke French with a purer accent, and there was some consolation even in that. True there was no occasion to be constantly driving people to Versailles or St. Cloud, but what was the good of having horses if I did not make use of them? And besides, if there was one thing more than another that I thoroughly enjoyed, it was acting as cicerone to a party of agreeable people. I might certainly have acted as cicerone without invariably playing the part of host besides, but it must be remembered that I was an Irishman, and not a Scotchman; and once at Versailles, I never could return without having first stood a dinner at the Réservoir, nor leave St. Germain without initiating my friends into the mysteries of a *filet à la Bearnaise* at the Pavillon Henri Quatre.

I was generally the only Englishman of the party; for, although I love and admire my own countrymen and countrywomen when at home, a lengthened residence abroad has convinced me that out of their native land they are desirable neither as friends nor companions. No sooner are the Bull family fairly across the Channel, than their characters appear to undergo an entire change, and a change by no means for the better.

Whether it be that continental living disagrees with them or that they feel the want of their draught beer, I know not, but that they become most ridiculous and disagreeable is certain. Young Bull, than whom, when at home, no one can possibly be more gentlemanly and unaffected, suddenly becomes either as rude and vulgar as a New York rowdy, or as stiff and starched as Queen Elizabeth's ruffles.

He dresses in the "loudest" fashion, interrupts cathedral services with his ill-timed impertinences, and Murray in hand and glass in eye, criticises public buildings and works of art with what he foolishly supposes to be the air of a connoisseur. No one can mistake young Bull when he enters a café or restaurant, for he struts in as if the whole place belonged to him. He knows perfectly well that it is the custom to take off one's hat to the *dame du comptoir* and the assembled guests, but he feels that he is a free and enlightened Englishman, and wont; and although the waiter addresses him in his own language, he will persist in displaying his truly diabolical French.

But if Bull *fils* is often ridiculous, his sisters are even more so. With their dresses tucked up half way to their hips, and petticoats so short

that their sturdy English legs are exposed to the public gaze, they go flaunting about from morning till night, staring into shop windows, and behaving themselves altogether in a most conspicuous, not to say indecent manner. If these same young ladies could only hear the comments which are made upon their dress and demeanour, as they flounce past the Café Rich and other establishments of a similar character, where roués most do congregate, they would shake a reef out of their petticoats and let down their dresses a few inches for very shame.

But the demeanour of the class to which I have alluded is simply ridiculous, whilst that of my "stuck-up" compatriots is downright disgusting. At their absurdities I cannot even laugh, and when in their vicinity I feel a chill on the hottest day of an Italian summer. Cold, supercilious, discontented, they appear only to exist to give trouble, or to do duty as human refrigerators in the gay world. To hotel-keepers they are at the same time a blessing and a curse; they always want their meals at unseasonable hours, and make a point of ordering dishes which are either out of season or nearly unobtainable. But then milor pays *en prince,* and according to the English *carte;* and if a landlord ever does

venture to expostulate, the answer is invariably the same—"We pay for what we have, and must insist upon our wants being attended to;" for these gentry never consult anyone's comfort or convenience but their own, and reduce everything to a money level. Why, in the name of humanity, do not these miserable mortals remain at home and vent their spleen upon their unhappy dependents? It would indeed be surprising, if amongst the myriads of English who annually visit the Continent, some agreeable, unostentatious people were not occasionally to be met with. No doubt there are many such; and it is the very fact of their being unobtrusive, that makes it so difficult a matter to find them; for they are generally lost in that motley crowd of noisy, purse-proud English pleasure-seekers, with whom the Continent is unfortunately overrun; and in justice to my own Irish fellow countrymen I must say, that though, perhaps, sometimes open to the charge of vulgarity, they are rarely "stuck-up"—being generally the most agreeable and amusing of companions. But taking them as a class, the Russians are by far the most gentlemanly and agreeable men to be met with in Paris; for they are lively without being coarse, open-handed without ostentation, and as liberal in their opinions as it is possible for men to be. I wish I could

say as much for "our gallant allies," the French. If a Frenchman does make himself agreeable it is more from a desire that you may be pleased with him, than that he may please you. He is certainly liberal, but then his liberality is unfortunately so exhausted upon his own proper person that his friends come in for but a very small share, whilst his egotism and vanity are overweening. A Frenchwoman in society is no doubt, as we all admit her to be, a charming creature; but pause, rash youth, ere you venture to pry into the mysteries of her domestic arrangements. Little idea have you, O amorous scion of the Bull family! of the immense amount of time and labour which that *belle Parisienne* yonder devotes daily to her toilet, nor of the many weeks of semi-starvation which she uncomplainingly endured before that dress which you admire so much was purchased. That elaborate *coiffure* is the result of ten hours of curl papers, which, to say the least, are not becoming at a breakfast-table; and were it not rank heresy even to hint such a thing, I should be inclined to assert that the lady is indebted more to M. Guerlain than to dame Nature for her brilliant complexion. If my countrywomen do sometimes dress in bad taste, they are generally neat and fit to be seen, and above all, they are not afraid of cold water, like the majority of Frenchwomen.

I never see a Frenchwoman at her ablutions without thinking of a cat, for she washes her face very much in the same fashion, and uses about the same quantity of fluid as pussy does at hers. She is certainly prodigal of her cold cream, but as she only uses that unguent as a sort of foundation for a second layer of pearl-powder, it can hardly be considered a detergent. It would be well if her toilet were as soon completed as is that of the domestic animal to which I have compared her; but I grieve to say that it is not. Powdered rouge has still to be applied to her colourless cheeks, and liquid ditto to lips that resemble anything rather than ripe cherries; whilst the eyebrows and eyelashes must in their turn be delicately pencilled with *pyrammée;* and when the finishing stroke is given, there is a picture, *et voilà tout!* The less said on the subject of her morality the better. Let an Englishwoman be never so degraded, she generally manages to retain at least some of the attributes of her sex; she may be hopelessly bad, but she is a woman after all. Not so with her French sister. Frenchmen themselves are obliged to admit that the depravity which exists, more especially amongst the better classes of their countrywomen, is absolutely startling; and that they have good reason for

saying so I could easily show, were it not against our ideas of morality even to hint at such things. But let the curtain drop over her faults and failings: whatever may be her shortcomings, she is a most charming and lively companion; and if her husband finds her all that his heart can desire, and is willing to forgive and forget her little peccadilloes, it is surely not for us to complain.

But whilst speaking of the mothers, let me say a word about their offspring. I used often to while an hour or two away in the gardens of the Tuileries watching the children at play; and most amusing it was to see the manner in which they imitated the airs and graces of their elders. Most English children of the same age would have been galloping about like young colts, screaming, squabbling, tearing their clothes, and keeping their mothers all the while in a perfect fever of terror and excitement. Not so these little Gauls; they were altogether too finely got-up for any such boisterous gaiety, and they behaved themselves with the utmost propriety and decorum. Whenever a little lady did so far unbend as to exhibit her grace and agility over the skipping-rope which two white-capped *bonnes* turned incessantly for her and her playmates' amusement, the way in which she

would first gather up her skirts was a sight to behold, her youthful adorers looking on the while in the most breathless admiration. The punctilio observed upon these occasions was worthy of the reign of Louis the Fourteenth of magnificent memory. In addressing one another, it was invariably Monsieur or Mademoiselle; and if a young gentleman ever forgot the respect due to the object of his affections, a timely "Fi donc, Monsieur Charles," or "Alfred," as the case might be, speedily brought him to order. Even when they accepted the *bon-bons* which I had brought with me for their especial gratification, they did so with the utmost nonchalance, as if they only partook of them out of compliment to me, and they would thank me in the most patronizing manner. Truly, there are many worse places for studying human nature than that same *petite Provence* in the Tuileries gardens. For beside the children there are the mothers seated underneath the trees, looking charmingly cool and refreshing in their light morning toilets; little red-breeched soldiers making fierce love to the *bonnes;* Old France decorated with the inevitable Legion, and Young France inhaling the eternal cigarette and ogling every woman that passes by; wide-awaked English tourists, turbaned Zouaves, and

cocked-hatted gendarmes—all of them fit subjects to "point a moral, or adorn a tale."

But I have not yet done with my French friends; for, writing as an ex-*flâneur*, what better theme can I have than the manners and customs of my late associates? For an Englishman, I had, I may say, a large circle of French acquaintances, whilst the opportunities afforded me of studying the peculiarities of the French character were such as are enjoyed by but few of my countrymen. Of the numerous *billets de faire part*, with which my table was wont to be littered, some came from the Rue de Bac, and some from the Rue de Breda. There was the terse, business-like note of my stockbroker asking me to dine with him at the Frères, and the suspicious-looking, triangular, pink-tinted, highly-perfumed billet-doux of "Mdlle. Angélique, *actrice au Gymnase*," soliciting me in the most winsome manner to join her little card party at the conclusion of her evening's performance. Madame de Château en Espagne de Boissy de Champignon's coat-of-arms headed some pumpkin-looking card of invitation, and Madame de Cours de la Bourse's flimsy enamelled pasteboard, with a terrible "*on dansera*" in one corner. I had certainly no reason to complain of a lack of invita-

tions during my residence in Paris, and yet hospitality is the very last crime of which I can accuse the French nation. There are, I conceive, but two ways of estimating a man's hospitality: either by the amount of money he spends on his friends, if he be rich, or by the cordiality of the welcome he gives them if poor. In France, the men who appear to have the most money are speculators on the Bourse, retired *épiciers*, and the hangers-on about the court of his Imperial Majesty Napoleon III. The first two classes entertain, it is true; that is, they occasionally make a bargain with some *restaurateur* to dine a certain number of their friends at so much per head, and they give a few balls during the course of the season at their own residence, at which orgeat and lemonade are the most expensive drinks, and biscuits the most substantial edibles that are provided. But when I say that for every napoleon thus expended, they lay out fifty upon their dress, equipage, and *menus plaisirs*, I do not think that I am shooting very far wide of the mark. Genuine hospitality, such as we have in England, is unknown in France; where a man would as soon think of asking you to share the conjugal bed as to partake of his family dinner; which meal, be it whispered *en passant*, is rarely of a sufficiently

substantial character to admit of the addition of an extra knife and fork with impunity. The French sacrifice everything for appearance. Madame dreads an addition to her family, because baby's embroidered long clothes will cost what would have sufficed to purchase her a new dress. Whilst M. le Mari shudders when he reflects that the "little stranger's" advent will entail a clear loss to him of two cigars, three cafés, and one *limonade gazeüse* per diem. With dress, equipages, box at the opera in one scale, who can be surprised that the cradle in the other is so often found empty, or that the French census shows pretty much the same numbers that it did some fifty years ago? French housekeeping is, as a rule, conducted upon the most economical principles. The higher class of Government officials and the leading financiers no doubt live in extravagant style, and entertain their friends in the most sumptuous manner; but the Hausmanns, the Rothschilds, and the Pereires, form but a very small proportion of the great world of Paris, and the remainder, when at home, live in a style which, if not exactly penurious, is certainly far from lavish. Husband and wife mutually agree to keep their household expenditure within the narrowest limits, that they may be the better

able to cut a dash out-of-doors, and purchase those luxuries which to them are of even greater importance than the common necessaries of life. Marriages amongst the better classes being either *d'argent ou de convenance*, that there should be but a small amount of love between the contracting parties is not surprising, nor that what we call "home comforts" should be as a general rule wanting in French households. Madame's time is fully occupied in dressing, visiting, exhibiting herself in her box at the Opera, or in some other less innocent amusement, whilst M. le Mari resorts to his club or café, where he plays billiards, drinks absinthe, and smokes cigars until it is time to take his *chère amie* to the Moulin Rouge or the Maison Dorée; for in Paris, what is denied to the wife is too often lavished on the mistress. One has only to take a stroll into the Bois de Boulogne on a fine afternoon to see the truth of this assertion; for it will not take the shrewd observer long to discover that the wife has often to content herself with a hired *remise*, whilst Phryne dashes past in a well-appointed phaeton, drawn by a pair of two hundred guinea horses. When English Lais or Phryne are seen in Hyde Park, lolling in their miniature broughams, it is generally pretty well

known whose money has paid for the turn-out of the fair frail one. Not so in Paris. Ask half-a-dozen men the name of the *entreteneur*, and the chances are that you will receive as many different answers. One will tell you that it is the old Marquis de Centans, and another the young Vicomte de Manquesous; whilst Alphonse de B—— and Alfred de C—— will boast at their respective clubs of the possession of those

"Fossil remains which she calls her affections,
And that rather decayed, but well-known work of art,
Which the lady persists in calling her heart."

The real fact of the matter is, that in France single fortunes are not as a rule sufficiently large to satisfy the extravagant wants of these *filles de marbre*, and so the Marquis gives the carriage and the Vicomte goes tick for the horses; whilst Alfred and Alphonse have their purses drained for the purchase of dresses, shawls, jewellery, or whatever *objets de luxe* the syren may from time to time require. The lady meanwhile plays off her numerous adorers one against the other, with a tact of which a Metternich might be proud. She knows that money is lavished upon her solely because she happens to be the fashion for the moment, and that were she sick or in want not one of her selfish lovers would give her the slightest relief or

trouble themselves about her, and so she victimizes them without compunction. Heart she has none; and she would hear of the incarceration of one lover and the suicide of another with the most perfect indifference. Indeed she would enjoy it, rather than otherwise, for it would add greatly to her "reputation." The number of men whom these Traviatas manage to ruin in the course of a few years would hardly be credited; for the Verisophts, with an additional dash of egotism in their composition, are to be met with in any numbers in Paris. "*La vie de Paris*" is the dream of every young provincial who has a soul above buttons; to become a *flâneur* his highest ambition, and no sooner is his worthy sire under the sod and he in possession of his share of the property, than off he starts for the gay capital, where, with his few paltry thousand francs, he endeavours to compete with the Russian, English, and American millionaires, who live but to spend money. He, too, must be the *entreteneur* of some Marguerite Gautier or another; not that he particularly cares about spending his money in this way, but simply because it is the fashion to do so, and he wishes to be *à la mode*. If he can only ruin a woman's reputation by sly hints and innuendoes, he is delighted. "*Ah,*

Alfred, mon cher, je ne puis t'exprimer comme cette charmante 'Misse' était éprise de moi. Mais, ma foi, je n'osais pas—tu comprends. . . . . Ces Anglaises sont si compromettantes. Elles rougissent à tous propos," &c. This is one of the greatest weaknesses of young France. If he could not *blaguer,* and boast of his *bonnes fortunes,* he would explode. To hear him talk, one would imagine that he was the *bête noir* of husbands, and a very Don Juan among wives. Even if he have no *bonnes fortunes* to boast about he invents some terrible story of a broken heart, a deserted home, and a desperate husband, in which he is of course chief actor, and he tells the story so often that he ends by believing it himself. For a good wholesome consistent liar, recommend me to a Frenchman whose great ambition is to be considered a lady-killer. His equal is not to be found, search the world over.

CHAPTER VII.

Young France and Horsemanship—An Equestrian Entertainment—High Play still known in Paris—An Old, Old Story—The Resources of Paris—How to live cheaply there — Taxed for being English—The Focus of all Luxury—Where does the Money come from—Rapid Transformation Scenes—A Bit of Old Paris—An Epitaph for Napoleon III.

"LOVELY Lais" is not the only object upon which money is expended by these would-if-they-could-be somebodies. Young France has of late years acquired tastes which his sires knew not, and his journey along the road to ruin is faster than in the days of the Bourbon. Louis Napoleon, the exile, acquired whilst in England a good many of our tastes and habits, and amongst others that love of horse-flesh which is one of the greatest characteristics of "ye true Briton." Napoleon III., by the grace of God and the force of French bayonets, Emperor, did not forget the well-kept hunting and racing establishments that he had seen on the other side of the Channel,

and the Imperial stables were organized on the English system. The Imperial horses were the finest that money could purchase; the Imperial mail phaeton the very perfection of good taste: everything, from the pole-chains to the groom's breeches, being strictly according to "Cocker;" and as the Emperor came tooling his chestnuts up the Champs Elysées nine Englishmen out of ten would have been ready to swear that it was a London turn-out. If the Empress brought extravagant toilets into vogue, the Emperor made it the fashion to drive fine horses, and young France is fast becoming of the horse, horsey; that is to say, he apes the bearing of the horsey Englishman, and talks of *le sport* and *le turf* as if he had been born in a stable. I cannot, however, say that he looks the horsey man; indeed, I doubt if he ever could do so; but who knows? Has not a French horse beaten all our English "cracks?" After that I can be surprised at nothing. Be this as it may, there is no denying that the French have of late years made a wonderful advance in everything relating to the *manége*, and the horses and equipages in the Bois de Boulogne of to-day are equal to any that one sees in Hyde Park or in the Prater at Vienna. The men, too, appear more at home in their

saddles than they did some few years since, when it was my great delight to gallop down the Cours de l'Impératrice, in the hope of frightening some of the cavaliers' horses as I went past, and seeing them send their riders flying. I almost think that my cob must have entered into the fun of the thing as much as I did, for he used to start off of his own accord the instant he came to the top of the ride, and never stopped until he reached the bottom. Such losing of stirrup-irons and clutching of pommels as there used to be as we came along was heartrending to behold, and the *sacres* and curses with which we were saluted were neither far nor few between. All that is in a great measure over now, and were I once again to take up my abode in Paris this little species of equestrian entertainment would, I fear, no longer be obtainable.

But if our "noble swell's" money does not go fast enough in ministering to the wants of the fair sex and cutting a dash in the Bois, there is yet another and a shorter cut to the Hôtel de Clichy. He can gamble. Now, although there is not much betting on the turf in France, and public gaming-houses have been prohibited, high play is still carried on to an alarming extent in Paris. It is an easy matter for any one who

"knows the ropes" to find some quiet little establishment where he can meet men both ready and willing to ease him of as many thousand francs as he may desire in the most gentlemanly manner, and at any known game, from beggar-my-neighbour to monte, from pitch-and-toss to roulette. No heavily-barred doors have to be passed ere one can gain admittance into these temples of Mercury, nor does a watchful janitor eye you suspiciously as you cross the threshold, as if you were a policeman in disguise. Oh no! Outwardly the house presents precisely the same appearance as any other private residence in the faubourg, and there is nothing in its interior arrangements that would suggest to the stranger the idea of a private "hell." The *salons* are filled with well-dressed people of both sexes, and if anything did strike the tyro as extraordinary, it would most likely be the large proportion of titled and decorated personages amongst whom he so suddenly found himself cast. Indeed almost every man in the room is either decorated or has a handle of some sort to his name, and the words "M. le Marquis" and "M. le Comte" resound on all sides. But it does not take the man of the world long to discover the absence of that indescribable something which distinguishes refined from dubious

society. Although M. le Comte's gloves are irreproachable, there is a nervous twitching about his fingers which suggests the *croupier;* and although the *pose* of his friend the Baron is grace itself, his keen black eyes keep restlessly wandering about in a manner that speaks ill for the tranquillity of the soul within. The ladies, too, are a *leetle* too good-looking, their dresses a *leetle* too *décolletées,* their ornaments a *leetle* too showy, for the class to which they profess to belong, whilst their conversation is carried on in a slightly higher key than one is accustomed to in the *salons* of the upper-tendom. If the Emperor were to commission Sir Bernard Burke or some other erudite herald to compile a French Peerage, what a dreadful life his would be, and what a number of duels he would have to fight for omitting to mention some noble family in his "Libro d'Oro!" How many marquises, comtes, and barons would he find whose titles had no existence but in their own imaginations, and how many families would he be obliged to deprive of the harmless pleasure of giving the prefix De to their plebeian patronymics! Such a proceeding would strike dismay into the hearts of the *parvenus* in the Quartier de Roule, and so delight the old stock in the Quartier St. Germain that

they would become the stanchest Bonapartists going.

But to return to my friends, the *chevaliers d'industrie*. Nothing can exceed their amiability; and when some one proposes a game of cards it is of course more for the sake of passing the time than for any desire on his part to gain money. The stakes, though small at first, will generally be found to increase in value as the night wears away, and the lady of the house will, as in duty bound, protest against such high play being carried on in her *salons*, and solemnly declare that she will never permit such things to take place again. The pigeon will be flattered and allowed to win a trifle at first, as he is all the world over; but the result is the same, whether in London or Paris: he has to purchase his experience, and gets hopelessly ruined in the process. When there is no pigeon present, I presume there is not quite so much *mise en scène*, but on this point I am not prepared to speak positively, for as I was always looked upon as an English pigeon, with a well-filled craw, they never threw off their disguise before me, nor did a "Grec" ever clasp his arms round my neck, *à la* Robert Macaire, and exclaim "*Embrassons, mon ami, nous sommes frères.*" I never had any very great

taste for gambling, and the little I did have soon vanished when I beheld the dexterous manner in which my noble friends always managed to turn up the right card at the right moment. One titled gentleman, a Pole, with whom I occasionally played, was the coolest hand at turning up the king at écarté that I ever met, even in France; and I verily believe that he could see through my cards, for he invariably knew what was in my hand as well, or even better than I did myself. There is no earthly use in quarrelling with these accomplished individuals; for if you suspect them of cheating, and intimate as much, they are always ready to demand satisfaction, which it is not generally advisable to give; and if you catch them in the act it is the old story—*Si je triche je m'en fiche,* and there is an end of the matter. As they did not get very much out of me, I found, after a few visits to some of the most celebrated of these resorts, that my place was more desired than my company by the assembled nobility, and I thought it advisable to discontinue them altogether; a proceeding that I never had reason to regret.

There are plenty of ways in which the *flâneur* can pass away his time in the French capital without having to resort to these private *tripots* for amusement. In London the stranger is often at

a loss to know what to do with himself until dinner time—in Paris never. There is always something going on, and amusements suited to every taste. If our *flâneur* be an anthropologist, he can take his seat at the door of some café on the Boulevards, and whilst sipping his Mocha, and inhaling his *Trabucos* or *Londres*, amuse himself by watching "the tide of life go ebbing and flowing beside him;" or if he be of an artistic turn, and an Englishman to boot, he can always pass a few hours amongst the old masters at the Louvre, and listen to the profound remarks made by his compatriots as they pause before the Assumption of Murillo, or some other painting, and stare at it open-mouthed, not because it is a great work of art, but because their guide-book tells them that it cost upwards of twenty thousand pounds, and "a picture ought to be good, you know, for that money." If he have a taste for the horrible, there is the Morgue and its ghastly occupants, always ready for his inspection; or if raree shows are his weakness, he can find marionettes innumerable in the Champs Elysées, whilst learned poodles and clever canaries are to be seen going through their performances from morning till night in almost every quarter of Paris. Many an hour have I passed listening to the voluble harangue of

poor —— late vendor of pencils to all the crowned heads of Europe, and often have I found myself standing amongst the crowd collected round some quack doctor or dentist, whose eloquence, had the rascal not been a charlatan by nature, would have made him famous at the bar or in the pulpit.

In no city that I know of can the stranger have his wants so speedily supplied, or his tastes more easily gratified, than in Paris. Should he chance to be a stalwart Briton he can dine off beef-steak and sup on Welsh-rabbit, just as easily as if he were within sound of Bow-bells; and the familiar trade-marks of Messrs. Bass, Allsopp, Salt, &c., smile on him from many a window as he passes by. There are snug bar-parlours to which he can repair for his mahogany-coloured brandy and aldermanic pipe, and cozy shades where the Scotch and Irish can imbibe steaming tumblers of whisky punch, and squabble over the merits of their respective countries, as is their amiable wont; the Yankee can have his "mint julep" and "gin sling" concocted as cunningly as in New York; and although his beloved bivalves may be wanting, I understand that an old mulatto woman has lately started a buck-wheat cake and corn-bread establishment for his especial behoof and delectation; and I should not be surprised if, ere this,

maple syrup, popped corn, and pea-nuts had been added to the list of American "institutions" to be found in the French capital. The Italian can have his heart gladdened by the sight of *minestra à là Milanese risotto,* and the national maccaroni at many a well known restaurant, whilst Naples itself cannot furnish forth better *biscotte, tutti frutti* and *granite* than does M. Canelli, on the Boulevard des Capucines. For the Russian there is *tchee kaché* and *quasst,* and he can have his carcass parboiled, basted, and iced in the most approved Tartar fashion, at the Bain Russe. In fact, the stranger has only to state his wants in order to have them at once supplied, that is, if he have money; for without a well-filled purse he must endeavour to forget the dishes of his fatherland, and content himself with a Palais Royal dinner, *à* 2-75, consisting of soup, three dishes, two desserts, half a bottle of wine, and *pain à discrétion,* and God grant that the poor fellow may have a good digestion. Nothing is easier than to live well in Paris, if you happen to be a rich man: nothing more difficult if you are a poor one. I know that many military men *en retraite,* the lower class of Government employés, and such like, manage to live respectably on very small incomes in Paris, but the economical way in which

they go to work would astonish an Englishman holding the same position in society. I remember an old captain, with whom I was at one time intimate, giving me a detailed account of the way in which he managed to make both ends meet, and a very sensible way it was, too, and one which many a poor Englishman now living in Paris would do well to follow. He had a small room, and a very snug little crib it was, *au troisième,* in a street near the Luxembourg, for which he paid some twenty or five-and-twenty francs a month—not dear, even for that remote quarter of Paris. He breakfasted at an adjoining *crémerie,* where, for the sum of fourteen sous, he obtained a large bowl of *café au lait,* a roll, butter, and two eggs —a regular "blow out," in fact, and quite sufficient to last him till dinner, if he only took the precaution of tightening his waist belt from time to time during the intervening hours. After breakfast he used generally to take a "constitutional" in the gardens of the Luxembourg, and from thence he proceeded to a certain *café,* where one could always be sure of finding him deep in the mysteries of dominoes, piquet, or écarté, until the *café* clock warned him that it was time for dinner. With military punctuality he would take, as the clock struck six, his own particular

seat, at his own particular table, in his own particular restaurant, where he had been accustomed to dine since the memorable day on which he bade adieu to his comrades of the 783rd of the Line, and took up his abode in Paris, and where he purposes dining until the Emperor takes it into his head to demolish the house to make room for some new street or boulevard, or until a greater potentate still—King Death—summons him to dine with Pluto. Being an *abonné* of the establishment, his dinner did not cost him more than thirty-five sous, so that his daily expenses for board and lodging were something less than five francs. Like honest Jack Falstaff, however, the sack he consumed, in the shape of absinthe and *petits verres*, was considerable, and out of all proportion to his other expenses, for even a Frenchman cannot sit the whole live-long day in a *café* without occasionally ordering something. But then he invariably played for the *consommations*, and being a very Pole at écarté and a Mephistopheles at dominoes, he generally contrived to be the odd man out. Without a very long apprenticeship, it would, no doubt, be impossible for an Englishman to live quite as economically as did my military friend. *Restaurateurs* scent the Briton from afar, and *cafétiers*

detect his presence, let him be disguised how he may. In vain does he dress *à la* Moosoo, twist his moustache with pomade Hongroise, and make a Parisian salaam to the *dame du comptoir;* on entry, he is "spotted" in an instant. Hardly has he taken his seat ere the white aproned *garçon* is at his elbow, with the *carte des Anglais* in one hand and *Galignani* or the *Times* in the other; and as the unfortunate victim at once sees that any further attempt to conceal his nationality would only make him still more ridiculous, he meekly resigns himself to his fate, and gives his orders in his own mother tongue. The Russian, the German, the Italian, nay, even Brother Jonathan himself, may occasionally pass muster as a Frenchman: the Briton never. Be he blackened like Othello, tattooed like a Maori, or habited like a Moslem, John Bull is John Bull all the world over. Being fully alive to this little fact, I never, during my sojourn in Paris, attempted to pass for anything but an Englishman, and I of course paid for the honour of being a British subject in the same way as the rest of my countrymen. To this very hour I shudder when I think of those monstrous *additions* which were furnished me at some of the great restaurants in the Palais Royal or on the Boulevards, and wonder how I ever managed

to endure the suspense of those *terribles quarts d'heure,* the horrors of which have been so vividly described by Rochefoucauld. Visions of dinners innumerable at Philippe's, Vefour's, Véry's and the Frères Provençaux rise up before me, and those little suppers in which I was wont to indulge at Verdier's or the Café Anglais, still haunt my dreams. Oh, admirable *chef* of the gastronomic temple in the Rue Mont Orgueil! how often, when chewing a dry morsel of ling on ship-board, has my mouth watered when I called to mind thy delicious *matelottes,* and how has my soul longed in distant lands for a dish of those *ecrevisses à la Bordelaise,* so skilfully prepared by thy brother in art of the Maison Dorée, for which I would, like a second Esau, have willingly sold my birthright, had I not unfortunately been a miserable younger son, without either fortune or expectations to barter. When I recal those days of reckless extravagance, the only thing that surprises me is how I ever managed to avoid the Hôtel de Clichy, and effect my retreat from France with the honours of war; for escape I ultimately did, although not without paying the penalty for my follies and excesses. Fortune stood my friend in a manner that I neither deserved nor anticipated, and after a lengthened

period of prodigality and recklessness, I found myself pretty much in the same position, so far at least as money was concerned, as when it had first entered my head to become a *flâneur de Paris*. The Crédit Mobilier was my sheet anchor, and with Victor Emanuel, Chemin de Fer du Nord, and various other healthy investments as kedges, I managed to warp up stream. I even contrived to make a little money in horseflesh; but then it must be remembered that in those days the French were not the horsey race that they now are, and so long as an animal was showy and quiet, soundness was a matter of secondary importance to many of the cavaliers of my acquaintance. But my speculations were not confined to this side of the Atlantic alone. America was likewise honoured by the investment of a portion of my capital; not a large one, it is true, but sufficient to give me an interest in the "Model Republic." By the disinterested advice of a shrewd Yankee whom I met at my hotel, I purchased a block of land in his native State, which said block has been a millstone round my neck up to the present hour, for it has never yet returned me a "red cent," and has cost me what my American friends would call a "smart sum" in taxes to Uncle Sam; and by the same advice

I took a share in a Newfoundland cod-fishing schooner, out of which fishy business I was only too glad to escape with the loss of one-third of the money invested. But it was not by these American investments that my career as a *flâneur* was brought to a close. It was from my beloved Crédit Mobilier that I received the *coup de jarnac* which sent me flying. The Bourse had been for some time exceedingly shaky, and the friend to whose sound advice I owed all the success that had attended my speculations, strongly advised me to get rid of my Mobiliers.

"Get rid of my Mobiliers! Why, they are rising!" I exclaimed, in amazement.

"My good friend," he replied, "they rise for precisely the same reason that a balloon rises—there is less than nothing in them. Adieu!"

These were his last words, and I saw him no more.

Like a fool, I for once relied upon my own judgment. Not only did I invest in Mobiliers for the account, but I must needs make a trip to Ireland, and leave my affairs in the hands of my broker. Had I only been on the spot, I might easily have escaped with a singeing, but being at a distance, before I could remedy the evil, the blow was struck, and one half of Mark

Tapley's little capital was in the pockets—I do not say of M. Emile Pereire, but of his associates. Can it be wondered that I loathe the name of Pereire, shudder when I cross the Place Vendôme, and tremble at the sight of the Bourse? or that when any of my friends speak in my hearing of intended speculations in French stock, I exclaim, in the inspired language of *Punch*, to those about to be married, "Don't"?

Paris is a modern Capua, in which it is next to impossible for any man not endued with Spartan resolution and Scotch cautiousness to withstand the manifold temptations that beset his path. Whatever may have been the extent to which the degenerate Romans and Pompeians carried their taste for extravagance and Sybaritism, it must have fallen far short of that reckless expenditure and luxuriousness which one sees in the Paris of to-day; and could Diomed only rise from his ashes, and take an evening stroll through the principal streets of the city, I think he would have to own that the capital of modern Gaul was a cut above Pompeii, even in the days of its greatest splendour. From the Palais Royal, by the Rues de Rivoli, Castiglione, De la Paix, the Boulevards, and the Rue Vivienne, to the Palais Royal again, and what would meet his eyes? One continued succession

of jewellers' windows blazing with precious stones; establishments devoted to the sale of *objets d'art*, exquisite porcelain, bronzes, pictures, carved wood, &c.; vast magazines stored with *objets de luxe*, three hundred guinea cashmeres, ethereal laces, elaborate embroideries, rich velvets, gorgeous silks and satins, and costly furs—everything, in fact, that the most extravagant taste can crave or money purchase. Friend Diomed being, we will suppose, a *gourmet*, would be particularly struck with the magnificent display in the windows of the restaurants and the *marchands de comestibles*, and he would doubtless discover amongst the edibles exposed for sale many a familiar dainty. Oysters from Britain, Gorgona anchovies, honey from Mount Hymettus, and, if the Ambracian kid, nightingales' tongues, and tomacula (*vide* "Last Days of Pompeii") were wanting, he would find lamb stuffed with pistachio nuts, *paté de foies gras aux truffes du Perigord*, and savoury sausages from Lyons or Bologna, no unworthy substitutes. If he were informed of the price of such dainties, and the quantity annually consumed, he would be more astonished still; for whilst in Pompeii the Ambracian kid and nightingale tongue consumers were a select few, in the capital of modern Gaul, every man seems to be

a Lucullus with the wealth of Crœsus at his command. Where all the money comes from that is spent daily in Paris, is a question which would puzzle a wiser man than friend Diomed. Who is it that purchases the diamond tiaras, pearl necklaces, and emerald bracelets which are displayed in the jewellers' windows, each article in itself a fortune? For whose shoulders are those costly cashmere and flimsy lace shawls woven?—whose the dainty feet for which Melnotte made those Cinderella-like slippers which I gaze on in admiration as I pass by? To whom do Messrs. Chevet and Potel et Chabot vend those exotic dainties which, if not exactly worth their weight in gold, are most certainly so in silver? and who is the millionaire that drinks the Château d'Yquem and Johannisberg at thirty francs the bottle? How on earth did the Emperor manage to obtain the "spondoolicks" to pay for the construction of all the new streets, squares, and boulevards that one sees springing up as if by magic in every direction; and where do the good people lodge when their houses are pulled down? for it appears to me that a good half of Paris is either in ruins or else rebuilding. Although no longer a *flâneur*, I still pay a casual visit to the French capital, and on each

succeeding occasion I feel more and more a stranger. I tell M. le Cocher to drive me to the Hôtel de Rosbif d'Angleterre, in the Rue St. Honoré, and I am politely informed that it is *en état de démolition.* To the Teutonic Vaterland in an adjacent street: it is in the same condition; to the Grand Hôtel de Chou-fleur et Petits Pois, round the corner, *idem;* until, in despair, I tell Jehu to go where he thinks fit, and I am finally deposited at an enormous establishment, where I pay six francs per diem for my bedroom, and eight francs for a dinner *à l'Americaine,* which I partake of with some two hundred other guests. My old stables in the Rue de Courcelles have been levelled with the ground; my favourite café has vanished; and when I next visit Paris I hardly expect to see a single one of my old haunts remaining. The Palais Royal, however, is still the same, and the streets in the vicinity of the Post-office (more especially the Rue Coq-heron) retain their ancient odours. On no account would I miss my daily visit to the Post-office, for it is only when in its vicinity that I can recal the Paris of former days. There, in spite of all Imperial innovations, still linger the well-remembered smells of ancient Paris. The fumes of roast chestnuts, cabbage-water, and fried potatoes

hang heavy on the air, and the smell from the gutter is as foul as in the days of the Bourbon. The *trottoirs* are as narrow, the streets as ill-paved, and the houses as dingy as of yore. Heaven grant that the Emperor be not advised to demolish this quarter likewise, and open a new street from the Place des Victoires; for if he do, there will be absolutely nothing left to remind the ex-flâneur of Paris as it was before the Second Empire. Napoleon the Little, indeed! How many years—ay, centuries—would it have taken the plodding Bourbon to have effected what he has accomplished even during the last ten years! Right well can he afford to laugh at the satires and lampoons of Victor Hugo, Rogeard, et Cie.; for he is *the* man of the age, and when he dies there will be no need to erect monuments to his memory. The terse simple epitaph of our own Sir Christopher Wren will suffice for him likewise—

"Si monumentum quæris, circumspice."

CHAPTER VIII.

The Banks of the Hudson, now and of old—Off to the Wilderness—An Antiquated Vehicle—The Region of Iron—The First Evening in the Wilderness—Forest Scenery—Light Boats—Preparations for a Sojourn in the Woods—Under Way—A Lake Voyage—The Jewel of the Forest The First Camping Ground—A Sportsman's Rhapsody—Camp Equipage—The Building of a Shanty—How not to Catch Fish in Lake St. Regis—The Wilderness at Eventide.

COULD worthy old Hendrick Hudson but rise from the dead, and, from the summit of the Catskill mountains, cast a glance over the glorious river that bears his name, and the fertile country through which it flows, how transfixed with astonishment his Excellency would be on beholding the wondrous changes which a few generations have wrought! Fertile corn lands where in his day stretched the boundless forest; flourishing towns and hamlets where stood the wigwam of the red man or the log shanty of the hardy trapper; floating palaces where once glided the frail bark canoe; and lastly, that mighty pioneer of civilization the steam-horse, flashing like a meteor

along the banks of the winding river towards the far-distant settlements of the West. With such a constant succession of startling sights, I fear the good old Dutchman's brains would become so hopelessly bewildered as to make him regret having exchanged, even for an instant, his narrow resting-place for the feverish atmosphere of modern American civilization, and cause him to beat a most undignified retreat.

Yes; since the days of Hudson, times have indeed changed—for the better, it is to be hoped, as regards the mass; but for those few whose sole delight is, like Robin Hood of old, to hunt the wild deer, and bivouac under the greenwood tree, how sadly the reverse! In the Northern American States, with one or two exceptions, those happy hunting-grounds which once stretched, in an unbroken line, from the western prairies to the shores of the Atlantic, are now no more; and that "forest primeval" of which the poet Longfellow sings, may almost be said to belong to a past age. Wherever there appeared the remotest chance of making the almighty dollar, there the merciless axe of the backwoodsman has laid the noble forest tree and tender sapling in one blazing pyre together, and they have left "not a wrack behind."

I have said that to this wholesale destruction of the American forests, there are one or two exceptions; and in the State of New York more especially there still exists a tract of country the general aspect of which gives a good idea of what the land must once have been. There the mighty giants of the forest are as yet unscathed; the wild deer still finds a covert in the pine-clad mountains, and the same fairy scene is reflected in the placid bosom of the woodland lakes as in days of yore. This region, from its difficulty of access, and the strangely-diversified character of its scenery, has been named the New York Wilderness; and it is this same wilderness I would now describe.

My first introduction to the Wilderness aforesaid was in this way. One sultry evening, in New York, I was recounting to an old sporting companion the many grievances, real and imaginary, to which I had been subjected since I first set foot on American soil. John Bull like, I was discontented with everything. The city was insufferably hot, and the fashionable (?) watering-places of the American mobocracy were my abomination. Return to them I would not; and to remain any longer in New York, with the thermometer at 98°, was out of the question.

What with gongs in the hotel, the infernal toll-toll of the fire-bell at the City Hall, the incessant roar of Broadway, the mosquitoes, the closeness of my bachelor's den on the fourth floor, and, worse than all, the impossibility of procuring a pewter of "bitter" wherewith to quench my insatiable thirst—life had, I declared, become so unbearable, that I had determined to "top my boom," and, bidding an eternal adieu to Yankeedom, to sail in the very next steamer for Europe; and if ever——

Here my friend, who had listened thus far to my manifold grievances with the utmost gravity and good nature, interrupted me, and by a few sensible remarks soon showed how little real cause I had for complaint. It was, he said, but a fortnight since I had landed in the States, and during that time I had seen but one or two seaport cities and a few overcrowded watering-places; and these not being exactly to my taste, I forthwith anathematized the whole country, and declared that it was not a fit place for a Christian to live in! All this was most unreasonable. He granted my prerogative as an Englishman to growl and grumble at everything not strictly British; but I was carrying it, he thought, a little too far.

"And now," said he, "I have a plan to propose which will, I feel confident, make you postpone your departure indefinitely. It is this: we are both sportsmen, and are, therefore, not averse to a little roughing. What say you, then, to a hunting excursion in the New York Wilderness? There you will inhale the fresh breezes from the Adirondac Mountains, instead of the pestilential airs of the city. In lieu of glaring Broadway, your camping-ground will be in the shady woods. Sport there is in abundance; and lastly, your chances of meeting any of those bescented *flâneurs*, for whom you appear to entertain such supreme contempt, will be limited in the extreme."

The thing was no sooner proposed than agreed to. True, the word "wilderness" sounded rather ominously of rough living and short commons—a state of things to which I am naturally averse; but, on the other hand, mountains and woods had such a charmingly cool and refreshing signification, as instantly to banish all my misgivings. And so the bargain was struck, whereby we agreed to stand by one another during a four months' sojourn in the Wilderness, and this our treaty we ratified over a sparkling glass of Heidseck.

It was wonderful how soon my spirits revived the instant I had once more a definite object in

view. All my American grievances were forgotten, and I would willingly have sat up till daybreak had I not been reminded of the long journey there was before me on the morrow, and the necessity of a good night's rest. So to bed I went, but only to dream of shady forests, purling streams, and sporting adventures by flood and field; and in dreamland I remained until I was aroused by the voice of the nigger boots. "Time to get up, sar; de Hudson ribber boat am going to start in tree-quarters ob de hour 'xactly." And, sure enough, in less than an hour's time I was on board the fast steamer, *Western World,* ploughing my way up the Hudson (or North River, as it is called) to Albany.

It is not my intention to describe the first part of our journey—the beauties of the Hudson have already been described by many abler pens than mine—nor do I wish to enumerate (as most English travellers think it incumbent upon them to do) how many times per minute my fellow voyagers expectorated between New York and Albany. The time passed so pleasantly in alternately admiring the scenery and discussing politics with my American friends, that I really had not time, I am ashamed to say, to devote to suchlike profound and interesting statistical computations; but I think

I may safely affirm that I arrived in Albany without any one having attempted to cajole me into a bogus speculation; neither was I insulted on account of my nationality, nor were even my poor nerves once shocked by the sight of any gross breach of decorum amongst my fellow passengers. At Albany we took the "cars" for Whitehall, which is situated at the foot of Lake Champlain, and here we again embarked in one of the magnificent steamers plying between the different ports on the lake; and she, in her turn, deposited us, our baggage, and our dogs at Port Kent, which lies about half-way up the lake, a distance of some sixty miles.

The scene which presented itself to my view as the steamer moved slowly away from the landing-stage was lovely in the extreme, and never to be forgotten. Before me, shining like a mirror in the golden rays of the morning sun, lay the broad bosom of the lake; not a breath of wind ruffled its placid surface, in which every surrounding object was reflected with life-like distinctness. It was a scene of perfect repose and peace, the death-like stillness being broken only by the monotonous dash of the steamer's paddles, as she continued her course up the lake. I was standing in the State of New York, but far away across the lake lay the

blue line of the Vermont shore, with its still bluer mountains rising in the background; whilst a little to the right lay Burlington, its capital, over which hovered, ghost-like, a thin grey cloud of smoke. Numerous schooners and small craft, their white sails hanging listless to the mast, lay motionless upon the water; whilst here and there a line of smoke on the horizon marked the track of steamers ascending and descending the lake. What a charming contrast this fairy scene afforded to the busy, noisy, sultry city which I had left but twenty-four hours before, and within whose limits I might still have been a denizen were it not for the timely advice of my *fidus Achates*, on whose head I inwardly invoked a benison, as I gratefully inhaled the pure morning air. Turning my eyes from the lake, I beheld the gentleman in question, whom I may as well at once introduce to my readers by the name of Mr. ——; well, suppose he assumes the modest one of Jones. Apparently unconscious of my benediction, he was busily engaged in packing our traps in an antiquated vehicle, which might, from its primitive appearance, have been successfully exhibited by Barnum as the family-coach of Noah, manufactured out of the *débris* of the ark; and in this, he informed me, we were to proceed as far as Keysville, where we

were to breakfast; and in Keysville we ultimately arrived, after enduring half-an-hour's purgatory in this box upon wheels, the internal economy of which was on a par with its outward appearance. A good breakfast, however, soon set us to rights; and my friend then obtained a waggon to convey us the fifty odd miles which still lay between us and our destination.

The waggon was not what its name would imply, a heavy, lumbering vehicle, but a strongly-built *char-à-banc*, drawn by a handsome pair of well-bred horses, and fast, to boot, we soon discovered, as at a pace of not less than twelve miles an hour we dashed down the main street of Keysville, to the evident gratification of the townsfolk, to whom a party bound for the woods is invariably an object of interest. After crossing a handsome bridge which spanned the Au Sable river, we debouched on a tract of country which did not compare favourably, either for cultivation or fertility, with the smiling cornfields on the banks of the Hudson. Rude fences, made by simply heaping together the roots of large forest trees, surrounded fields of growing corn, planted with such a disregard to economy of space as would have driven an English farmer distracted. Farm-houses, invariably painted white, and looking

distressingly clean, lay at intervals along the road; and numerous log shanties, looking as distressingly dirty—the homes of Irish immigrants —added to the picturesqueness of the scene, if not to the purity of the atmosphere. The road, which was made of planks, and kept in capital order, followed the windings of the river until we came to the village of Au Sable Forks. Here the aspect of the country changed, and became desolate in the extreme: we were entering the region of iron. The sides of the mountains had been completely denuded of wood by the charcoal-burners: not a stick or stump that could be made use of had been left in the ground; vegetation had completely disappeared; and the atmosphere was laden with the smoke of the charcoal-pits and the sulphurous fumes from the smelting furnaces, the chimneys of which belched forth their flames as we passed, reminding me strongly of the "black country" of South Stafford. The same desolate scene continued for some miles—indeed, along the entire road there was not a single object of interest. We halted at a way-side inn to dine, and arrived at our destination, the St. Regis House, a little after dark, having been somewhat more than eight hours on the road.

I was surprised to find a house of such pretensions in the forest primeval; for it appeared to be a substantial frame building, capable of accommodating at least twenty guests; and my surprise was heightened when, on repairing to the supper-room, I found half that number already seated at a well-laid table, covered with all kinds of backwoods delicacies, venison and trout being the *pièces de résistance.* We were not long in joining the party; and a jovial lot they proved to be. Sportsmen, like ourselves, the conversation soon turned upon the chase, that, to us, all-absorbing topic of interest; and most delightful to my ears were the friendly discussions that ensued relative to the weight of certain saddles of venison and lake trout which it appeared had fallen to the rifles and rods of our newly-acquired friends. Being a novice in backwoods lore I could only, of course, be a listener; but Jones, who was an old hunter in the St. Regis country, and therefore regarded as an authority on sporting matters, did the talking most satisfactorily for both. Well can I remember how pleasantly that first evening in the Wilderness (the precursor of many similar ones) passed away! In the woods master and man (or rather, I ought to say, the payer and the paid)

are on terms of almost perfect equality, so that our party was enlivened by the presence of the guides belonging to the establishment, who all, without the slightest embarrassment, added their quota to our evening's amusement by singing songs and telling hunting stories—helping themselves, at intervals, to our choice French brandy with no sparing hands. It was late before our party separated; Jones and myself, both thoroughly worn out, retiring to our beds, and the remainder of the guests to make preparations for an early start to Keysville, their business engagements, much to our regret, rendering further delay in the woods impracticable.

The sun was shining brightly when I awoke from the most delightful sleep I had enjoyed since my arrival in the States. The cool air of the forest, redolent of cedar and hemlock, stole through the open window, wooing me in the most irresistible manner from a bed, which elsewhere had encompassed me for another three hours at the least. Small attraction had bed for me then; in a trice I was up, and, with my host as a guide, I sallied forth on the verandah, to take my first view by daylight of that forest scene which for eight-and-forty hours had occupied my thoughts by night and day. The house, I found, was sheltered on three

sides by the forest, the space in front of the verandah alone being open and denuded of timber, the ground sloping down to a small lake that lay at some fifty paces' distance from where we stood. The lake was of no very great extent, and its picturesqueness was completely destroyed by the number of dead hackmatack trees with which it was begirt—killed, my host observed, by the annual flooding of the lake for lumbering purposes. The chief beauty of the scene lay in the rich foreground of forest that stretched between us and the St. Regis mountain, which stood out in bold relief at a distance of some six miles, clothed to its very summit with the most luxuriant foliage. As I then gazed for the first time upon that glorious virgin forest, and watched the varying shadows playing upon the deep green slopes of the mountain, I began in some degree to realize a portion of that wild enthusiasm which invariably filled my friend Jones when dilating upon the charms of savage life, and to feel as if I, too, might yet find a home in the wilderness. Always addicted to the harmless amusement of building castles in the air, I at once began their construction. Separated from the outer world, I should, I thought, soon learn, like Timon, to despise its senseless and enervating pleasures; and instead of wasting my sub-

stance in riotous living, I might in that wilderness enjoy an abundance of good things for a sum that in England would be but a miserable pittance. With a good log-house to shelter me from the weather, a small patch of garden, the cultivation of which would occupy my leisure hours, a larder supplied with game from the forest and trout from the lake—and what more could I possibly require? Unless, indeed, it were a thorn in the flesh, in the shape of a wife, to prevent my experiencing too great a sense of freedom and contentment!

My host, Paul Smith, brought my day-dreams to an abrupt conclusion, by proposing that we should take a turn round the place; so after one more look at the distant mountain, I passively followed him to the water's edge, where stood the barn and boat-houses. The boats were of all shapes and sizes, alike, however, in one respect, namely, their extreme lightness—a matter of no small consequence in that wild region, where the "portages" (places at which, from there being no water communication between the lakes, the boats have to be carried by the guides) are often three miles across. My cicerone explained to me that the timber used in their construction was the best white pine, clear of knots, the scantling so reduced by a planing-machine as seldom to exceed a

quarter of an inch in thickness; the ribs were of ash, and copper tacks were substituted for iron nails wherever it was practicable. Built in this fashion, the smaller boats averaged but little over half a hundred weight—light enough, in all conscience, comparatively speaking, although sufficiently heavy, as I afterwards found, to make one's back ache in a three miles' portage. In Paul's eyes the greatest attraction about the St. Regis House was evidently his recently constructed American bowling-alley; and to this he called my attention with great glee, expatiating at length on its merits, computing at the same time the dollars it would eventually be the means of bringing into the strong-box of the hotel. After playing for an hour, to give us an appetite, we returned to the house, and after breakfast the real work of the day began.

In the first place, there was a grand levee of guides, with whom we had a most lively time, for it having been agreed to leave to their judgment the choice of a camping-ground, the result was that they quarrelled amongst themselves, and it required no little tact on our part to bring their discussions to an amicable conclusion. It being finally determined that we should make our first halt on the Upper St. Regis lake, we next proceeded to make arrangements with the guides and likewise with Smith for the hire of boats and

supply of provisions during our sojourn in the woods. We selected two guides, one to act as guide in chief to our noble selves, the other as cook, butler, shanty-keeper, wood-chopper—in fine, as general factotum; their wages (or rather the salary they agreed to honour us by accepting) being at the rate of a dollar and a half each per diem, or somewhat more than an English ensign's pay.

Two boats, the lightest of the batch, having been set apart by Smith for our use, he left us to get together whatever might be wanting for the commissariat department during a prolonged camping-out; whilst Jones and myself amused ourselves on the verandah till dinner time by trying the range of our rifles at any floating object we chanced to see in the lake. The guides, meanwhile had no very easy time of it—bullets had to be run, patches cut and greased, fishing-tackle overhauled, axes ground, and many suchlike jobs to set about, in themselves apparently insignificant, but which, if forgotten, might be the means of causing us no end of trouble and annoyance when once at a distance from head-quarters.

"Early to bed, early to rise" is a general rule in the woods, and that night we likewise commenced our reformed life by retiring to our nests as the clock struck nine; and before the morning

sun had gilded with its rays the pine trees that crowned the summit of the St. Regis mountain, I again emerged from between the sheets, and began in good earnest to make preparations for an early start from the hotel. Young as the day was, the house was already astir, and I found Jones and our host busily engaged in piling up on the verandah such a mass of heterogeneous packages, as seemed to my young ideas out of all proportion to our possible requirements. I mildly insinuated as much, but speedily repented of my temerity, the veteran Jones giving me such a rebuff for my pains as most effectually to shut me up and make me retire from the field in dire confusion.

"What," he should like to ask, "could a greenhorn like myself possibly know of camp necessaries? I had much better go and eat my breakfast, and leave him alone to get things together. Nothing bothered him more than being interfered with. If I doubted his word I could ask Smith or the guides whether it wasn't all right," and so on. As he was, of course, backed in his assertion by everyone in the establishment, from our host down to the "boy who did chores," there was nothing left but to sneak away from the presence of his insulted majesty, solacing myself with the hope that I might one day be able to

pay him back in his own coin, and prove who was the real greenhorn of the two.

Our start was not effected at the early hour I anticipated. A dozen times at the very least we were on the point of shoving off the boats, when it would suddenly occur to one of the party that some indispensable requisite had been left behind, and search had to be made for it until found. Once we were halfway across the pond, and, as I hoped, in a fair way of escape, when, to my dismay, I heard Smith yelling in wild Indian fashion from the shore, holding up at the same time a white object in either hand, which, when we regained the landing, turned out to be neither more nor less than a couple of bottles of Worcestershire sauce, which I had purchased in New York for my especial delectation.

At length we got fairly under way, and a most imposing appearance we presented as we shot across Formby Pond, Smith and all the hangers-on of the establishment joining in a prolonged parting cheer, which was caught up by echo after echo until lost in the distance. Jones, as the acknowledged head of the party, led the van, his boat being pulled by our "boss" guide, whose labours he eased by the dexterous use of an Indian paddle; whilst guide No. 2 and

myself occupied in like manner the boat next in succession, only that in our case the guide plied the paddle, whilst I strained at the oars; for, nettled at the manner in which my self-sufficient friend had spoken to me in the morning, I had previous to my departure offered to bet him that my boat would be the first to reach the Upper St. Regis lake. Although his lordship had refused to bet, I still determined to leave him astern if it could possibly be done. So I at once gave up to my guide the paddle, at which I was a muff, and set to work with a will at the oars. A large boat, laden to the wales with camp requisites, brought up the rear, and in this order we pulled along for some distance.

On reaching the further side of Formby Pond we entered a shallow tortuous channel, which joined it with the Lower St. Regis lake. The banks on either side were fringed with gaunt, scraggy trees, and the surface of the water was so completely covered with lilypads as to make my billet as oarsman anything but a sinecure. Ten thousand frogs raised their discordant voices as, perspiring at every pore, I pulled my way through the tangled mass; the words of their refrain being, it seemed to my excited imagination, "Keep time, keep time," as if in derision of

my futile attempts to do so. For a weary mile did this state of things continue, when we again found deep water, and shooting round a point of land, suddenly debouched on the Lower St. Regis lake. It was a noble sheet of water, some five miles in length, with an average breadth of two, but, like many of the lakes in the St. Regis district, its general beauty was in a great measure destroyed by the numerous fires which in different places had swept along its shores, completely denuding them of vegetation, leaving nothing but gaunt, charred stumps behind.

The boats were now headed in a direct line across the lake, and after a quarter of an hour's hard pulling, during which time I managed to pass my worthy mentor, we reached our first portage; and most perplexed did I feel as to what was next to be done, for to my inexperienced eye not a sign of a road could be discovered in any direction. My guide, however, did not leave me long in suspense. Leaping ashore, he desired me to unship the oars and help him to drag the boat high and dry on the beach; and this being accomplished to his satisfaction, he turned her keel upwards on the sand and indulged in a prolonged pull at his whisky-flask. It was with a deep-drawn sigh of regret that he returned it to his

haversack; then handing me the oars to carry, he crawled underneath the boat, which he finally balanced on his shoulders, and, like a large snail, walked bodily away with it through a tangled mass of underwood.

Before attempting to follow him I turned to wave a farewell to Jones, who, in evident disgust at our having got the start, was venting his wrath on the guide; that worthy, with true American independence, returning the compliments in the choicest backwoods slang. Leaving them to fight it out at their leisure, I shouldered the oars and started after my guide, who, with arms well stretched forward the more easily to balance the boat, was now rapidly pushing his way through the tangled brush with a facility only to be acquired by constant practice.

The first portage was a short one—not more than a couple of hundred yards across—so that in less than five minutes our boat was launched on the first of the five small lakes which formed the water communication between the Upper and Lower St. Regis. So quickly did my guide get over his work that we had crossed the pond and hauled our boat out of the water at the second portage before Jones and his guide made their appearance; and I was comforted with the assur-

ance that if I only continued as well as I had begun it was the last we should see of them until our arrival at the camping-ground.

Lakes two, three, and four, although picturesquely embosomed in the forest, offered nothing particularly worthy of remark; but the last lake of the chain, or "Green Pond," as it is called, was so enchantingly lovely, that even now, after a lapse of months and oft-repeated visits, I feel myself still powerless to describe its matchless beauties. As I first beheld it, sparkling in the glorious summer sunshine, its pale green waters separated from the deeper green of the forest by a narrow belt of yellow sand, it appeared more like some precious jewel set in gold and enamel, than a simple woodland lake; and, lost in admiration, my thoughts wandered back to those days long past when the "Arabian Nights" were to me a mine of wealth and the Wonderful Lamp had a reality of existence. No emerald plucked by Aladdin from trees in the enchanted garden could rival in tint the lake at my feet—no diamond among Sinbad's treasures could surpass it in brilliancy and purity; and had the conventional cloud of smoke arisen before me, and the Spirit of the Lake made his appearance to demand the cause of my intrusion, it

would have been in perfect harmony with the scene. The waters of the lake, apparently of a greenish hue, were in reality as clear as crystal, and, although of considerable depth, were so transparent that every leaf and shell at the bottom was distinctly discernible, the tinge of the lake arising from its bed being composed of various kinds of moss and water plants. To my mind it seemed almost like sacrilege to sully its purity by launching our boat on its glassy surface; but my guide evidently thought otherwise, for, petulant at the delay, he cunningly hinted that the rival boat would certainly overtake us if any more time were lost; so, with an inward resolve to return at no distant date, I once more resumed my duties as oarsman, and, bidding farewell to Green Pond and its beauties, pulled slowly across the lake.

A few strokes carried us to the opposite landing-place, and in another few minutes we had crossed the last portage and were floating on the Upper St. Regis lake. It was little more than half the size of the Lower St. Regis, but the difference was scarcely appreciable, and in every other respect it was infinitely superior to the sister lake. The St. Regis mountain rose in gentle undulations from the water's edge, and the surrounding

forest, which had here escaped both the ravages of fire and the backwoodsman's axe, stood out in all its primeval majesty, adding not a little to the general beauty of the scene. Several small, thickly-wooded islands dotted the surface of the lake; and far away at its lower extremity were seen the range of hills which separate the St. Regis from the Saranac district. Taking it all in all, no lake that I had seen in America so favourably impressed me at first sight, and most thankful did I feel to the guide for having selected its shores for our first camping-ground in the Wilderness.

The said camping-ground proved to be about halfway down the lake, and we had barely time to reach the spot ere the other boat made its appearance. I was pleased beyond measure to find on its arrival that Jones had got over his bad temper and was once again in high feather. He immediately set the men to work, and declaring that he was altogether too hot and tired to do anything himself, led me some few yards into the woods, where was a spring of the purest water, and then, producing a cigar-case and brandy-flask of portentous dimensions, he threw himself on the mossy carpet and invited me to make myself at home under the shade of the broad-spreading

beech-trees. I did not require much pressing, so, lighting a cigar, I followed his example, and stretched myself on the bank beside him. For a few minutes my worthy friend appeared to be lost in thought, but suddenly arousing himself from his reverie, he emitted a dense volume of smoke from his lips, and addressed me something in the following manner:—

"Well, old fellow, what do you think of the woods now? Rather better this than Broadway, I take it. No sound here save the voice of Nature; no smell but of green leaves and the sweet fragrance of pine and hemlock; and no sunlight but what is subdued by the overhanging foliage. Can any carpet in Fifth Avenue compare in texture and softness with this mossy one of the forest; or does any champagne at Delmonico's, think you, sparkle like the water of this woodland spring? In what portion of the globe, may I ask, have you ever felt a greater sense of freedom from all human care, breathed a purer atmosphere, or seen a fairer prospect than here on the St. Regis Lake? to the patron saint of which I quaff this bumper—neither hock nor Burgundy, it is true, but what is as pure, if not so costly, a glass of native Monongahela whisky!"

Extravagant as my friend always was whenever his beloved Wilderness was in question, I now felt fully as enthusiastic on the subject as himself, and could only find words to thank him for having been the means of initiating me into the mysteries of forest life, and promised to obey his commands implicitly for the future.

For two hours or more we sat by the spring, and were only roused at last by the arrival of the third boat with the heavy portion of our camp equipage, which we forthwith helped them to carry to the proposed site of our shanty, situated some three hundred paces from the water. The number of packages which that boat disgorged was something wonderful to behold; and how they had managed to carry them across the different portages in so short a time would have puzzled most men, for it took us all an hour or more to transport them from the boat to our camping-ground. There were guns, rifles, and fishing-gear; pots, pans, and kettles; two large India-rubber blankets, and woollen rugs of all shapes, colours, and sizes. Then there was a tremendous affair which Jones called his canteen, filled with an entire metal breakfast and dinner service—"the most eternal, heavy, clumsy fixing," his guide confidentially assured me, "to be found

in the whole State of New York;" and having evidently had the pleasure of carrying it on his back over many a weary portage, he, no doubt, spoke feelingly on the subject, and knew its weight to an ounce. Among the many objects for which I could imagine no earthly use, I may enumerate a lamp large enough for a railway signal-post; an oblong box pierced with holes after the manner of a colander; a small iron grate such as was used in ancient times to hold the beacon fires; and a pot labelled "glycerine and tar!" It was the commissariat department, however, which eclipsed all others in the variety and bulk of its packages, for Smith had determined that, whatever other ills might befall us, starvation should not be one of them; so he had provisioned us more as if we were bound on a voyage of discovery to the North Pole, than on a quiet hunting excursion in the Wilderness. Everything was found, however, to be correct by Jones's list, and the whole lot having been piled under a huge hemlock, we set to work at the shanty.

I found that the guides had not been idle; whilst we had been taking our ease, they had felled several large trees, and cut them into logs, some twelve, others eighteen feet in length; and

as my services were not required in the building department, I was politely requested to assist in rolling the said logs to the site of the shanty. I soon discovered, to my cost, that the berth of log-roller to the company was anything but a sinecure, and more than once I felt inclined to rebel against the orders of my chief, and to strike work altogether. But my sense of duty prevailed; and having at length completed the task to my master's satisfaction, he graciously gave me permission to sit down and look on.

It was my first introduction to backwoods architecture, and I therefore watched the builders with considerable interest. The design of the house was, I at once perceived, of the most primitive, not to say rude description, belonging to an order of architecture unknown in England, and which even Ruskin himself would have found difficulty in classifying. His "Seven Lamps" threw no light on the subject. But if the design was primitive, what shall I say of the workmanship? I think the simplest method will be to give a short description of the manner in which this our log-house was built.

In the first place, then, the two largest eighteen-foot logs were laid parallel to one another, at about ten feet apart, these logs forming the foun-

dation of the front and back walls of the building. On the extreme ends of these were next laid, crosswise, two of the shorter logs, thus forming a sort of frame on which to raise a superstructure. All four logs were kept firmly in their places by means of notches cut sufficiently deep to allow of the logs fitting into one another; and it is in the cutting of these notches correctly that the chief difficulty of shanty-building consists, for, unless the logs are made to lie closely, the building will be neither warm nor sightly. In precisely the same manner tier after tier was laid, the logs being rolled into position, by means of an inclined plane, as the walls gradually increased in elevation. When at length the height of seven feet had been arrived at, it was pronounced high enough, and an extra log having been added to the front wall, so as to give a slant to the roof, the working party divided, two starting off in search of saplings for rafters, another pair to strip spruce bark for the roof, whilst Jones and myself, armed with a huge cross-cut saw, proceeded to make a doorway in our domicile by cutting an opening through the front tier of logs, it being the fashion in backwoods architecture to make the apertures, both for windows and doors, after the completion of the walls. As it was warm

autumn weather, neither door nor window shutters were required, and the entrance was made purposely wide, so as to admit plenty of light and air into the interior. Two mortal hours did it take us to cut through the logs, and by the time we had made an entrance five feet wide by six in height, the men had returned with the rafters, and stripped sufficient bark for the roof.

At this stage of the proceeding I received a quiet hint that a little fish would be no bad addition to the supper-table, and, being somewhat of the same opinion myself, I at once started off with my guide, leaving the others to finish the shanty as best they could during my absence. The spot selected by "Phil" (that being the name my guide delighted in) for our first essay lay some half-mile down the lake, where a huge rock jutted out into the water, and as he pulled gently towards it, I began to prepare my fishing tackle, which was of the most elaborate and approved description. I had just succeeded in fastening the casting-line to my satisfaction, and was about to select some killing flies from my well-stored book, when an ejaculation from Phil so upset my equanimity, that I nearly let book, flies, and all drop into the water. I say an

ejaculation; and so it was—expressive, if not altogether elegant.

"Hell!" said Mr. Phil, resting on his oars.

"What did you say?" I indignantly demanded.

"What!" continued the unabashed rascal. "Why, how in thunders do ye expect to kitch fish with them yere fixins? Them darned English notions of yourn aint of no account in these diggins, I tell yer. Hickory rod, hemp line, No. 6 hooks, and venison bait—them's the sort for these waters. Bet a 'quarter' that ye'll hook nary fish this blessed night with that gear, anyhow ye fix it!"

This was American freedom of speech with a vengeance, and I hardly knew whether to laugh or be angry; however I said nothing, quietly determining to give him a bit of my mind on some future occasion. Arriving at the rock, I found that the fish were rising in every direction; and being desirous of showing Mr. Phil the folly of his assertions, I lost no time in making a cast, full of confidence as to the result. Phil now began in the most methodical manner to prepare his own fishing appointments. He first cut a tough sapling to serve him for a rod, and then from the depths of his coat-pocket drew out suc-

cessively some dirty twine wound on a piece of cigar-box, a paper of hooks, and a good sized lump of beefsteak, which last was thickly encrusted with tobacco-dust and ashes. It was with supreme contempt that I watched these proceedings; and when he had at length completed his arrangements, and began to fish, I could not help telling him, in my most sarcastic manner, to let me know when he caught his first trout, as I was anxious to see him land it. Hardly had I turned my eyes away from the wretch, when I heard his infernal drawling voice, in which I could detect a slight touch of sarcasm:

"Capting," said he, "guess I've hooked a fish; feels a kinder like a ten-pounder. How many have you got over thar?"

It was only too true! With his miserable tackle he had already succeeded in hooking a fine large trout, whilst I, armed with the lightest of trout rods, and flies which a celebrated maker had solemnly assured me were tied expressly for American lake fishing (Oh! Martin Kelly, how could you?), whipped the water in every direction without so much as getting a rise or hooking a single minnow! I felt exceedingly disgusted, and began to fear that what Phil had asserted might, after all, turn out to be true. I did not, how-

ever, think it advisable to let that worthy know the extent of my misgivings, and endeavoured to impress upon him that my non-success was solely owing to my having in the hurry of the moment selected the wrong flies, a mistake which it was then too late to rectify. If I thought to impose on Master Phil's credulity I was mistaken, for he was by no means a fool.

"Capting," he replied, as he landed another trout, "that's so, no doubt, but the sun's going down yonder, and we want fish; it is of no account how we catch 'em, so as they are on hand when supper-time comes. You try them flies again when there's time to spare, and five hungry men ain't a waiting for their supper. Jist for this once use hook and bait, and see whether you can't catch enough fish for your own supper, at all events. If ye're anyways sore on the pint, jist say the word, and when we get back to the shanty I'll swar ye caught the whole string with yer fly-rod: they may believe it if I don't."

All this was said with such dry humour that I could not be angry with him; indeed, I was only too glad of an excuse for changing from fly to bait, not wanting to have the laugh against me when I returned to the shanty. To Master Phil's evident satisfaction, change of baits produced a

corresponding change of luck, and in an hour's time we had caught a dozen fine speckled trouts, averaging half a pound each.

The sun was setting as we pulled homewards, bathing lake and mountain in a flood of purple light; and as I sat in the stern of the boat I watched the strange effect produced by the shadows on the slopes of the St. Regis. As the sun slowly sank, a dark cloud seemed to steal up the side of the mountain, covering as with a pall its purple-dyed forest. Higher and higher it rose, until the whole mountain was enveloped in gloom; one bright spot lingering for a moment on its summit, giving it for a time the appearance of some blazing volcano, and then it also

"Suddenly sank into darkness
As when a lamp is blown out by a gust of wind at a casement."

Those who are accustomed to the noise and glare of a city, experience at first a sense of extreme depression as the sun goes down, and darkness comes on in the Wilderness. I know at least that it was so in my own case. There was but little twilight, and to my ears the voices of the woods sounded strange and unearthly as they were borne across the water by the cool evening breeze. The melancholy cry of the loon was answered by

the screech of the owl, whose prolonged hoo-hoo-hoo-hoo-ha sent a chill through my veins which was by no means pleasant.

"It's 'tarnal cold," said Phil, as the boat shot up on the beach; "but don't fret, they'll have built up a fire by this time sich as yer don't see every day in your country. I reckon wood's kinder cheap here, and pine knots to be had for the cutting."

My worthy guide proved to be correct as usual. A lurid glare hovered over the forest; and when I came in sight of the shanty, I was fairly dazzled by the enormous fire they had piled up, the forked flames from which shot high into the air, illuminating the forest for a considerable distance. I stood for some minutes at the edge of the clearing, gazing on the novel weird-like scene before me—such a one as Salvator Rosa loved to paint. In the foreground, the fire, made of huge pine trunks, seemed to send its flames high over the roof of the shanty, in front of which Jones and the guides were busily at work preparing supper. Stripped as they then were of coat and waistcoat, they looked, with their bronzed faces, scarlet hunting-shirts and slouched hats, infinitely more wild and picturesque than any brigands, veritable or theatrical, that it

had ever been my good or rather bad, fortune to meet; and their *poses* could not have been more graceful had they taken lessons from the first stage-master in Europe. Jones evidently considered himself the *cordon bleu* of the establishment, contenting himself with the general superintendence of the cooking department; and it was most amusing to watch his portly figure bending over the fire as he took a spoonful from one pot and a tempting morsel from another, with all the importance of a newly-fledged Ude. A few yards to the rear stood our shanty, which looked exceedingly cosy, as the bright firelight streamed through the wide entrance, illuminating every nook and cranny in its log-built walls; whilst the gloomy depths of the forest formed the background of a picture to which it is beyond my powers to do justice.

"What luck?" cried Jones and the guides in a breath, as, emerging from the shadow of the trees, I joined the circle round the fire.

"First chop," responded for me the incorrigible Phil, holding up at the same time our string of trout for general inspection. "Them's the most killing flies of the Capting's, I ever did see; bait hain't no sort of a chance alongside them. Nary fish could I hitch, do my darndest; so ye may

thank the Capting yonder for yer suppers; he's the best fisherman of this crowd, and no gammon."

I thought it would be a pity to contradict such an accomplished liar as my guide, so I modestly acknowledged the congratulations which were freely offered on every side, and crept into the shanty to hide my blushes.

CHAPTER IX.

Supper in the Wilderness—American Guides and English Gamekeepers—Plans for the Morrow—The Evil Deeds of "Pot Hunters"—The Music of the Hounds—The Dignity and Immortality of Cooks—Trolling with a Spoon—An Attempt at Boat-carrying—Rough Roads—Out of Luck—Nothing for Supper—Night Hunting—Unexpected Guests—The true Definition of a Civilized Country—At Home in the Pathless Woods—"Still Hunting"—Learning to be a Backwoodsman—First Experiences as a "Still Hunter"—Nights in the Woods.

A WONDERFUL change for the better had been effected in the internal arrangements of the shanty during my absence. The interstices between the logs had been carefully filled up with moss, so as effectually to exclude the cold night air, and the bark roof was evidently impervious to rain, and strong enough to resist the fury of those autumnal storms which occasionally howl through the wilderness. In lieu of a carpet, the fragrant sprigs of the hemlock had been piled on the floor to the thickness of at least a foot; and a rude pine-slab had been ingeniously

fitted into the wall to do duty as a dining table in wet weather. Our stores having been piled in rear of the shanty, under a sort of bark wigwam, we had an abundance of room; and soon our rifles and fishing rods had, under Jones's direction, particular racks assigned them, and were symmetrically ranged along its walls. Nothing that could possibly tend to our comfort or convenience had been forgotten. We had a good warm shanty to shelter us, provisions to last us a month or more, and every prospect of good sport—no wonder, then, that I felt jubilant, and responded to the taps on the frying-pan (our backwoods dinner-gong) with a light heart and smiling figure-head.

A most appetizing smell of fried fish pervaded the atmosphere as I took my seat on an old tea-chest which, for my especial behoof, had been placed at the fire, close alongside the liquor hamper, which constituted the chair of office of the veteran Jones, who, with a brief, "Now, then, lads, pitch in!" by way of grace, himself set us the example with right good will. There was no ceremony observed at the meal, and I had barely time to secure my share of the trout before the entire mass had disappeared, the guides following Jones's commands with alacrity, "pitching in," as

he called it to some effect. It was wonderful to behold how rapidly the food disappeared down their capacious maws; and if the truth be told, I fear that neither Jones nor myself were much behind them in voracity, for the mountain air had sharpened our appetites to such an alarming extent, that even double our ordinary allowance of food did not satisfy us—indeed, it was not from satiety that we at length left off, but simply because there was nothing left to eat, and it was voted *nem. con.* that a double modicum of grog was the very thing to set us to rights and make up for the deficiency. Our chairman produced, therefore, a couple of large demijohns, one filled with Monongahela whisky for the guides, the other with old Irish ditto for our own especial delectation; and whilst the water was boiling, we filled our pipes with fragrant Virginia, and, stretching ourselves at full length on the green couch in the shanty, proceeded to enjoy our calumet of peace. I found the hemlock twigs so delightfully soft and springy, that I rejected with contempt the India-rubber blanket which my guide offered to spread for me, as an article altogether too effeminate for a hardy backwoodsman, and only fit for such delicately-nurtured puppies as I had met at Saratoga and Niagara.

"Rough fellows, the guides," said Jones, "but good-hearted, notwithstanding. And now let me request you to be particularly cautious how you speak to them, for you must remember that there is a vast difference between an American guide and your English gamekeeper. I know that in England a broad line is drawn between master and man; but it will be better if here, at least, you can for a time forget your exclusiveness, and endeavour to treat the men more as friends than as mere hired servants. Don't for one moment imagine that I wish you to forget your proper position, or dispense with the services which, as an employer, you have a right to expect at their hands; but you can surely give your orders in a manner that will not be likely to wound their self-esteem, for, bear in mind, that though a man may be your guide to-day, there is nothing to prevent his being some fine morning the President of the United States—an honour which, in your case, would be impossible. I ought to know the American character, and I say again, treat the men kindly, and you will never have reason to regret your condescension. So begin at once: tell them to knock off work and come in here for their share of the grog and tobacco."

They did not require to be told a second time.

In they trooped, and, squatting themselves opposite to us at their end of the shanty, prepared to make an evening of it. We had no need of candles, the light from the fire being more than sufficient to make everything look bright and cheerful. So the men having filled their pipes, our president proceeded to open the meeting.

"Now, lads," said he, "what's to be the game for to-morrow? Come, George, what shall it be? Just give us your opinion of things in general."

"Wal, Squire," replied the individual in question, who was our chief, or rather, in American vernacular, our "boss" guide, "I guess after breakfast the boys'll have to take back Paul's boat; and once they've made tracks, I'll put the dogs out towards Fish Pond—that is, if you're for running a deer to-morrow; and whilst you watch the water in the direction of Clear Pond, the Capting and Phil can mind the lower end of the lake, and have some fishing at the same time."

"Well, George," said the Squire, after some reflection, "I think that will be about the best thing we can do under existing circumstances; but you know how I hate 'pot-hunting' of every description, and were it not that a little venison must be had without delay, I would set

my face against driving deer to water, or night-hunting either for that matter."

"But," he continued, turning to me, "I forget that you are a green hand in the woods, and, therefore, altogether ignorant of the effective manner in which the hunters of this and the neighbouring counties have been for years past endeavouring to exterminate the herds of deer for which this district was once celebrated. You must know, then, that this Wilderness of New York has an area of between two and three million acres, extending from the head waters of the Hudson River to within a short distance of the Canada line, and westwards from where we are now sitting upwards of thirty miles—a tract of country extensive enough, you will allow, to satisfy the requirements of the entire sporting fraternity of the State; and so it would be if the men who dwell on its borders, and whose interest it is to do so, would only take ordinary measures for the preservation of the game that yet remains. But they will not. Selfish and stubborn, they resist the laws passed by the Legislature for the preservation of the deer, which they slaughter indiscriminately, in season and out of season, in the most barbarous manner. In midwinter, when the snow lies deep on the ground, the deer are forced by

hunger to browse on the pine branches, and gnaw the bark from the trunks of the trees, which renders their flesh bitter and unfit for food; and yet, will you believe me when I tell you that some of these ruffians (for they are nothing else) run down the poor starved creatures upon snow-shoes —no very difficult matter, as the sharp hoofs of the deer break through the snow crust at every bound, and they are speedily exhausted—and despatch them with the blow of an axe, for the sake of their hide alone, which, at that season, would be worth at the most one dollar, or some four shillings British money! As the spring comes on, the genuine 'pot-hunter' pursues his vocation under rather greater disadvantages; but he is fully equal to the emergency, and has discovered various methods for slaughtering deer, hardly less cruel and destructive than the primitive one of hunting them upon snow-shoes—the two commonest methods being night-hunting and driving to water. In both cases the hunter has to be provided with a boat, and, in night-hunting, with a large lamp as well. But, as you will have the opportunity of seeing for yourself how the whole affair is managed, I need only for the present observe that the destruction of deer in these parts has of late years been carried on to an extent that

bids fair to exterminate the breed at no distant date; and then good-bye to forest sports on the eastern side of the continent!"

"That's so, Squire," remarked George. "When I were a boy, our folks lived down to Burlington, Varmont; and every fall, regular, a party of us youngsters had used to cross Champlain, and hunt for a month or so in these very woods—never quite so far out as this, for our outermost shanty was built jist where Paul's barn now stands. In them days deer was as thick as huckleberries; and down the river, by Formby Pond, I've seen as many as a score of them feeding on the lilypads, in one summer's afternoon: you may now look till all hell freezes over without finding so much as a single track. You're about right, Squire, it's pretty nearly time to make tracks one's self, and start off west or north into Canada, where, they tell me, there's plenty of moose and deer yet."

"Yes," said Jones, "and there used to be moose in this wilderness—and where are they now? Where are the wild turkey and the beaver which once abounded? Vanished! gone, perchance, with the red man of the forest to the far-far West, there to remain for a few short years, until again driven westwards by their white persecutors, and finally swept from off the face of the continent

into the waters of the Pacific. As you all know, there is not a man who has worked harder than myself to have the game laws properly carried out —and what has been the result? I have incurred the enmity of almost every hunter in the district, and have been more than once threatened with an ounce of lead by the very men I desired to serve; so I have determined to let them have their own way for the future, and slaughter the deer after their own fashion."

Discussing in this manner the past, present, and future of the wilderness, the evening wore rapidly away, and it was a late hour for the woods when, wrapped in the folds of my scarlet mackinaw blanket, I at length composed myself to sleep.

I rose from my bed of hemlock more refreshed than from slumbers on a bed of down. A plunge into the cold waters of the lake, followed by a smart pull of three miles to restore circulation, gave me an appetite for breakfast; and, that over, George and the "Squire" started off with the dogs, whilst Phil and myself directed our course to the foot of the lake where we had agreed to watch for deer.

On reaching the small river which formed the outlet of the lake, I had another essay with my fly-rod, my labours being attended with rather

better success than on the previous evening; whilst Phil set to work with a landing-net and caught minnows for our night-line. We had been employed in this manner for an hour or more, when suddenly the cry of the hounds woke up the echoes of St. Regis, and brought Phil at full speed to the boat. "Throw that darned rod of yours ashore, Capting," cried he; "we've no time to spare, the dogs are close to, and the deer may make for the water at first start. Kitch hold of an oar, and keep your eyes skinned; he'll be sure to come in by the pint yonder—that is, if he takes the water anywhere between this and where the Squire is stationed, up towards 'Little Clear.'"

With my eyes fixed on the spot indicated by my guide, I sat still and listened to the music of the hounds as, in hot pursuit of the flying quarry, they rapidly swept along, making the old woods ring again with their cheerful voices. At one moment my hopes would be raised to the highest pitch as their cries were borne to us, clear and distinct, from the high grounds in the vicinity of the lake; and the next my spirits would sink below zero, as I heard the sounds growing gradually fainter and fainter until lost for a time in the distance, to be again caught up in some other

quarter, showing us that the startled deer had doubled on his pursuers.

"Guess you like to hear the noise of them dogs, Capting?" said Phil, interrogatively. "Some folk don't, howsomever. Can't see no kinder fun in it—like the man from Boston, Mass., who went out hounding with old Steve down to the Lower St. Regis."

"What about him?" I asked.

"Wal, ye see, Steve and this chap had been a sitting in their boat for some considerable time a-watching for deer, but nary a deer could they see, and my gentleman gits a kinder riled at having to wait. 'Call this sport!' says he to Steve; 'I guess I'll jist go back to the shanty and liquor up and hev a smoke. Ther'll be more sense in that,' says he, 'than in sitting here the whole day a-doing of nothing.' 'Hold hard,' says Steve, 'and in less nor ten minutes you'll hear finer music than ever ye did in the meeting-house down to Boston, Mass.' Wal, the words were hardly out of his mouth, when that yaller dog Tige began to give tongue, and in less nor a minute the other three dogs got on the scent, and away they all went, a-yelling like mad, in the direction of Spectacle Pond. 'There,' says Steve, a-grinning like a wild cat, 'didn't I tell ye how it

would be? Don't ye hear the music now? Ain't it fust class?' 'Hear it!' says Boston, looking a reg'lar vexed, 'how in thunder can I hear it when them cussed dogs are kicking up that eternal row!' Them were his very words, 'Hear it!' says he, 'how in thunder can I hear it when them cussed dogs are kicking up that eternal row!'" And, infinitely tickled at his own wit, my worthy guide threw himself down on the seat of the boat, and fairly shook with laughter.

His mirth, however, was doomed to be nipped in the bud, for the loud yelp of a hound made us both spring to our feet; and in an instant Phil's quick eye had caught sight, not only of the dog, but of the deer itself, which, unperceived by us, had taken the water, and was already half-way across the lake, swimming rapidly for the nearest point on the opposite shore. With a muttered malediction, Phil seized the oars, and, motioning me to sit down in the stern of the boat, began to pull vigorously across the lake.

"Git yer rifle ready," said he, after a couple of minutes' hard pulling; "he's too far off to give ye a chance at his head in the water; so wait till he touches bottom, and as he goes up the bank let him have it."

It was, unluckily, the narrowest point of the

lake—not more, I should say, than half a mile from shore to shore—so that we had not gained much on the deer, which was swimming at a rapid pace, when I saw him suddenly emerge from the water and go bounding up the bank. I had just sufficient time to give him a couple of shots before he gained the thick underbrush which fringed the lake, and he became lost to view.

"Guess ye missed him that time," said Phil, as the bow of the boat touched the shore; "we'll jist have a look whar them balls of yourn went to, and then we'll put the dog on his tracks again." We did not take long in finding the marks of my ounce balls, and as the deer had evidently escaped uninjured, we recrossed the lake for the hound, and, having again put him on the fresh deer-tracks, patiently awaited the result. The dog soon began to give tongue, but after a few minutes he got out of hearing distance, and all again was silent. Two hours or more elapsed, and neither deer nor dog having made their appearance, we were about returning to the shanty, when I perceived Jones's boat suddenly shoot round the point of land I had been watching, and at the same instant my guide began to ply his paddle with an energy that showed me there was something in the wind, although for my own

part what that something was I could not for the life of me make out, for it was only just as Phil told me to stand up to fire that I at length perceived, at the distance of some fifty yards, the head of a deer in the water.

"Look sharp!" cried Phil, in a state of intense excitement, "or the Squire will get the shot. Give me the word when you're ready, and I'll steady the boat. Aim low and take yer time over it, or ye'll miss him altogether."

Fearful, however, lest my friend Jones should take a long shot at the deer and deprive me of my chance, I fired, and put an end to the deer's life and Mr. Phil's admonitions at one and the same instant.

"That's a first-rate shot," he cried, as, laying hold of the buck's horns, he proceeded to pass a knife across its throat. "Another minute and the Squire would have been aforehand with you, and then I'd have felt about as bad as he does now, I'm a-thinking."

Jones certainly did not look amiable when he came up with us; but his was no selfish nature. He soon recovered his wonted equanimity, and congratulated me on having killed my first deer in the Wilderness. We pulled the buck in triumph to the shore; and Jones having volun-

teered to break him up, I lit my pipe and sat down to watch the performance. My friend was well skilled in the gentle science of woodcraft, and the rapid way in which he could cut up a deer was a sight well worth seeing. The horns were not good enough to keep, so, after drawing and cleaning the inside, he with one stroke of an axe severed the head from the carcase and threw it to the dogs, which, in anticipation of a meal, sat licking their chops at a short distance from the theatre of operations. The hide was then drawn off the forequarters down to the second rib, when the carcase was divided into two parts; the saddle, well wrapped up in the hide, to be despatched as a present to Smith, and the shoulders, &c. to the shanty for our own delectation.

"Wal, Capting," said Phil, as he quietly lighted his pipe, "I reckon that ain't such a bad mornin's work, arter all. The meat might be fatter, that's a fact; but we'll find some picking on them forequarters. And now, as I've the box full of minies, jist lay hold of a paddle, and let us set our nightline; fish tastes a kinder sweet arter living on salt pork for three months or more. I guess I'll stretch the line from the island yonder to that pint; it's about the best spot in the lake, for lots of big fish work about the tail of the bank; so

pull away, and let's see if we can't get the line sot before dinner." It was some seven hundred yards from point to point, and we baited over a hundred and fifty hooks; but Phil was an experienced hand, and in less than an hour the work was completed. "There," said he, as he passed the last hook through the back of a minnow, "if that line ain't a sagging with trout to-morrow mornin' I don't know these waters, and you'd better look out for a smarter guide than old Phil."

On returning to the shanty, I found Jones deep in the mysteries of an Irish stew—a dish in the concoction of which he surpassed himself. At such moments it was dangerous to approach my friend, for cooking was his weak point, and woe to the unhappy man who dared to interfere in the management of the kitchen when he was within hailing distance! I know I never ventured to do so, and I should particularly like to know the name of the man who ever did. Jones was the first man who inspired me with that proper veneration for the order of cooks, which I am happy to say I now possess. "Cooks!" he would indignantly exclaim, when roused by hearing some disparaging remark made concerning the culinary art; "cooks! how in the name of

heaven can you expect good cooks, when you persist in treating them as slaves, rather than as friends? You invite the family doctor to your table, whilst your cook—the true conservator of your health—is banished to the kitchen. If you want to find examples of the highest philanthropy, of the deepest sense of honour, amongst men, where are you to look for them if not amongst the despised order of cooks? Did not Soyer nobly devote himself to the regeneration of your military cooking department in the Crimean war? and did not Vatel kill himself solely because the fish had not arrived for the dinner of his master, the great Condé, and his honour was at stake? Shades of Vatel, Bechamel, Carmel, and Soyer! your honoured names will still be remembered when those of your masters will have long been forgotten!"

Our second evening in the woods passed away pretty much in the same manner as the first; the night's amusements were, however, diversified by a general shooting match, the object aimed at being a lighted candle stuck in a bottle placed at some thirty paces, distance. Jones and myself fired against one another, the agreement being that there should be a fine of half a dollar for breaking the bottle, and of a quarter for missing

the candle altogether. I soon retired from the contest in disgust, for I invariably had to pay forfeit; whilst Jones, firing with wonderful accuracy, not only evaded his fines, but pocketed my dollars at a rate that bid fair speedily to reduce me to bankruptcy.

Early in the morning, Phil and myself started off to look after our night-line; and, on taking hold of it, I at once felt that we had hooked some fish. I paddled gently along whilst Phil overhauled the line, and in a few minutes we had several white, or lake trout in the boat, besides a beautiful speckled trout, weighing upwards of two pounds. One of the lake trout was a six-pounder —a mere nothing, my guide assured me, for those waters, he having himself hooked, the previous season, in a small neighbouring lake, one that weighed sixteen pounds when cleaned. They are generally trolled for with a live minnow or spoon, but they are sluggish and do not give much sport; nor is their flesh by any means as good as that of the speckled variety. The sun not having made his appearance, Phil proposed that I should try my luck with a spoon before returning to the shanty; and to this I readily consented. But the sport was bad, for although I did ultimately succeed in hooking a small lake trout, he made so

little play that I might as well have had a stick at the end of my line; and I mentally resolved to cut that kind of fishing for the future.

After breakfast, accompanied by Phil, I made an excursion to a beautiful lake in the vicinity, "Big Clear," where Jones thought it probable I might get a shot or two towards sundown, if I watched the shores. It was on the portage between the St. Regis and this lake that I made my first attempt at boat-carrying, and never had poor devil greater reason to repent his temerity than had I! It did not appear, I thought, such a very difficult matter to carry on one's back, for the distance of a mile or two, a sixty-four pound boat, so, as we pulled down to the portage in question, I told my guide that it was my intention to carry the boat across to Big Clear.

"Guess you'd better let me carry the boat," quoth my familiar; "it's cussed hard work for them as ain't used to it. Besides, the day's a kinder warm, and the road ain't a 'plank' one by long chalks. If you aire determined to do something, jist take one end on yer shoulder, and I'll take t'other; that'll make easy work for both on 'us, and we'll walk her along like chips a breaking." But no! I had determined to carry the boat, and carry her I would; so, after taking a pull at

my brandy-flask, I turned the infernal thing keel upwards on the bank, as I had seen Phil do, and tightening my belt, prepared to do or die.

"Now then, Capting," said Phil (as, feeling very much as Samson must have done with the gates of Gaza on his shoulders, I lifted the boat from the ground), "jist you keep her head well up, and foller straight arter me. You'd better keep yer eyes skinned, for the road here ain't first-rate, that's a fact; and them tarnal roots are apt to trip a feller up when he's least expecting of it."

My guide was correct, the road was *not* first-rate, the first few hundred yards lying straight through a Slough of Despond, across which I floundered like a second Faithful. Phil had a true appreciation of the ridiculous, and, out of sheer devilment, led me the very worst road he could have selected.

"Now then," he would shout, pointing to some yawning hole three yards across, "mind how you step along here, Capting; if you think you can't manage it you'd better go round. Why, sakes alive! (seeing me up to my knees in bog), if he aint stuck! Hold on a minute till I give yer a hand. Wal, now darn me if I ever did see this ground so soft afore! but never ye mind, if the

road *is* rougher further on, it's dryer, and that's one comfort."

And so this Job's comforter kept leading me deeper and deeper into the mire, until I thought I should have dropped from utter exhaustion; but I did ultimately manage to reach solid ground again, and was complimented thereon by my treacherous guide.

"You did that stretch 2·40, and no gammon," said he, with a face as long as a main-topgallant bowline. "And now, if I were you, I'd take a spell, for it's uphill for the next half mile, and you'll want all the wind you can raise, I'll warrant ye."

Now, if at that particular moment the wretch had volunteered to give me some assistance, I would have jumped at the chance. Indeed, I waited several minutes in the hopes that it might perchance strike him that such an offer would be acceptable, but it did not; so being altogether too proud to hint such a thing myself, I made up my mind for the worst, and, shouldering the boat, prepared to collar the hill. Although the road was truly a *via dolorosa* to me, I can't help laughing even now when I think what a precious guy I must have appeared to Phil, as I painfully toiled across that blessed portage. The timber

lay pretty close; and at one moment I would be brought up with a round turn by the bow of the boat coming in contact with a tree, and at the next, stumbling over some root or branch, I would be within an ace of falling down with the boat on top of me. At such times Phil would solemnly caution me to be careful not to break the boat, if I desired to get back to the shanty in time for supper. He never said a word about my neck, thinking perhaps that it was predestined to be broken elsewhere. Still I stumbled and struggled on, until Phil had not the heart to say another word; nay, he so far relented as soon to beg of me to allow him to do his share of the work; but my "dander was riz," and I indignantly rejected his offer. I did eventually manage to reach Big Clear, but in what a plight! stiff, sore, drenched through with perspiration, a mere ghost of that self-sufficient individual who had started, so full of confidence in his own strength and endurance, a short half hour before. I was so completely done up, that I told Phil to do what he thought proper with the boat, and, laying me down in an old weather-beaten shanty, composed myself quietly to sleep.

When I awoke I found that my guide had lit a fire and cooked some fish; and, after a good feed,

feeling somewhat restored, we started off to watch for deer. The whole of that afternoon I sat in the stern of the boat, alternately scanning the wooded shores of the lake with my glass, and listening to Phil's hunting stories. Sport we had none, for although I did see one deer he was out of range; and as Phil paddled noiselessly towards him he scented us, for, throwing back his head with an angry snort, he bounded back again into the forest. Notwithstanding our bad luck, I enjoyed myself exceedingly, for it was a glorious evening, with just sufficient air stirring to make it pleasant on the water.

We returned about sundown, and found friend Jones in a "tantrum," for, by some mismanagement, the residue of our forequarter of venison had been left uncovered, and was so fly-blown that there was no meat for supper. I gently hinted that it would be a good opportunity to try our luck at "night-hunting;" and although Jones invariably made a point of "pooh-poohing" any suggestion I might have the misfortune to make, he, on this occasion, readily assented, and graciously gave me permission to accompany the party, on the condition that I would lie quietly at the bottom of the boat, and not open my mouth on any pretext whatsoever.

Our preparations were soon made. The large lantern, which formed so important an item in our camp equipage, was trimmed, cleaned, and lighted; and with the "boss guide" at the paddle, Jones in the bow, and I at the bottom of the boat, we slipped quietly across the lake. Our course was the same as that taken by Phil and myself in the morning, Jones having determined to begin the night's work by trying amongst some lilypads in the sluggish channel that leads to the Big Clear portage. On leaving the lake the boat's way was stopped, and we slowly dropped down the narrow stream, which was hedged in on either side by dense underbrush.

Not a sound was to be heard. The guide noiselessly feathered his paddle in the water. Jones, rifle in hand, peered out into the darkness, whilst I listened with bated breath to catch the faintest sound which might indicate the presence of deer. Minute after minute passed away, and not a leaf stirred: there was evidently no deer in that direction; so the boat's head was put about, and we pulled back to the lake. After a few minutes' consultation between Jones and his guide, it was agreed that the outlet should next be given a trial, and thither our course was shaped accordingly. Arrived at the outlet, we found that

there was not sufficient water to float the boat; so off came shoes and stockings, and into the water we all went like a lot of mudlarks to drag her over the shallows. I am afraid I came off the worst of the party, for, being entirely ignorant of the bearings, I first stumbled into a hole, and got a thorough wetting, and then nearly broke my neck over an infernal log that lay right across the stream; whilst to add insult to injury, I distinctly heard Jones make use of the word "muff!" as I anathematized "night-hunting" generally. A considerable time elapsed before we got clear of the many obstacles which blocked up the stream, and, once more resuming our stations in the boat, we were able to go ahead without fear of snags and sand-bars. Once or twice the boat's way was suddenly stopped, for the quick ear of our guide would catch some faint sound as of distant hoofs; but they were false alarms: and after a moment's pause he would again send us along as noiselessly as before. At length even I distinctly heard a noise ahead. There could be no mistake about it this time: some deer were in the water, and in another minute we would be amongst them. I was so excited that I could hardly breathe. Slowly and steadily George brought up the boat, and Jones, suddenly pulling down the slide of the

lantern, brought his rifle to his shoulder and prepared to fire. The lantern had a powerful reflector, and threw such a strong light ahead that we could distinctly see three deer in the water, staring at us in a most bewildered manner. They evidently could not make out what it all meant, and the boldest of the three—a young buck of an inquisitive turn of mind—advanced a step or two to investigate matters. Halting for an instant, he gave a snort of defiance, and, with eyes glittering like balls of fire, advanced another fatal step—his last, for the sharp clear crack of Jones's rifle rang through the forest, and the poor buck fell, dyeing the waters of the stream with his life's blood. Our prize was soon bled and hauled into the boat, and it was generally agreed that a finer three-year-old buck could not be found in the entire State of New York. The ball had struck him in the centre of the forehead, and Jones was excessively proud of his shot.

"There," he said, pointing to the bullet-hole, "that's the spot to fire at; you at least give the poor devil a chance—for a buck's head, let me tell you, may easily be missed even in broad daylight—while, if you do hit the mark 'plumb centre,' down he comes in his tracks, and you have not to go wandering up hill and down dale in search

of him. Now I'll be bound you wouldn't have cared where you hit him so that he was 'potted;' but I'm not a pot-hunter, thank heavens! and I like to kill my game in a sportsmanlike manner."

Although I could not exactly see the drift of his argument, I perfectly understood the mysteries of "night-hunting." The whole thing consists in having a dark lantern, the slide of which is kept up until the hunter has arrived within a short distance of his quarry; when down comes the slide, and the light suddenly flashing into the eyes of the deer, so frightens and fascinates them that they have not the power to fly, and are thus easily knocked over by any muff who can keep sufficiently cool to hold his rifle steady. I perfectly agreed with Jones that "night-hunting" was the vilest kind of pot-hunting, and ought only to be resorted to in extreme cases, when the larder could not otherwise be supplied.

Our return to the shanty was triumphant. We made up for our two hours' enforced silence, by shouting and yelling until the very owls and loons retired from the contest in disgust. There was no danger of breaking one's neck over logs in the dark, for not only had we the brilliant light of the lantern, but Jones and myself held each a blazing torch of fat-wood, so that, as the French

would say, the entire forest was *éclairé au jour*. On reaching the lake we fired off our rifles to apprise Phil of our approach; and to my surprise, before the reports had well died away, our salute was responded to by a regular *feu de joie* in the direction of the shanty.

"What the deuce is all that about?" I inquired.

"A party from Smith's, I'll be bound," said Jones; "it's a lucky thing we've got some meat, isn't it, George?"

Jones turned out to be correct. Five hungry sportsmen were anxiously awaiting our return, all of whom, Phil declared, had been praying for an hour or more that we might not come back empty-handed. Their wants were immediately attended to, for in a backwood shanty hospitality reigns supreme; and so long as a guest makes himself agreeable, and does a fair share of the work, he is welcome to whatever the larder or cellar may contain. I have invariably found that genuine hospitality and a low state of civilization go together; and the greater the intelligence of a people, the less their generosity. In fact I have come to the conclusion that the true definition of a civilized country is simply a country where one can get nothing without paying for it, and I think that most travellers will say the same thing.

We were a merry lot in the shanty that night, but we had not much sleep, for our domicile was hardly large enough for a party of nine, and we were packed as closely as herrings in a barrel.

Our guests remained for some days, and during their stay I had but little sport. They had all the hunting to themselves, and they did their best to slaughter deer—in the water and out of the water, by night-hunting and driving, in genuine American fashion—but with, I am happy to say, little success, only two deer having fallen to their ugly, heavy, small-bored rifles. I amused myself with my fishing-rod until their departure, and killed several string of fine speckled trout in the lakes and streams of the St. Regis. I soon began to feel at home in the pathless woods, and, dispensing with the services of Master Phil, I would wander miles away from the shanty, and occasionally camp out for the night by myself, without having the least fear of burglars; taking good care, however, to carry a compass with me in case of accidents. Like a true backwoodsman, I used every morning after breakfast to practise with an axe for an hour or so, and after having on many occasions by a miracle escaped lopping off my own leg by mistake, I at length became,

as Phil expressed it, "almost as smart at felling a tree as a beaver."

And so the late summer passed away, and with the autumn came the true sport of the Wilderness —deer-stalking, or "still-hunting," as it is called in backwoods vernacular.

Still-hunting is not learnt in a week nor a month, nor yet a year—to be a first-rate still-hunter the experience of a lifetime is required. It is as different to deer-stalking in the Highlands as can well be imagined, for in the woods no "Dollond" is required, nor does the hunter crawl along on his belly like the Father of Evil. The American still-hunter is generally a character, living for weeks and ofttimes months all alone in his rude log shanty. He is of a retiring and taciturn disposition, and only to be drawn out when under the magic influence of an extra lot of whisky. He is considered an authority on all sporting matters, and his exploits are continually being referred to by his admirers, something in this manner: "Dew yew mind, Phil, when old Steve shot that 'bar' down to Cranberry Pond?" or "I can tell yew, Capting, that 'painter' Ike killed near Lion Mounting some seven year agone was the darndest, biggest, ugliest critter I

ever clapped eyes on, and his ditto warn't to be found in the whole of Franklin County, nor in New York State either for that matter."

When the hot sun has begun to tinge the leaves of the maple, the still-hunter takes down his rifle from the rack where it has lain since the previous mid-winter, and gives it a thorough overhauling and greasing, prior to a start for the forest. His camp requisites are neither numerous nor costly. A pot, frying-pan, axe, bowie-knife; and in the commissariat line, a bag of flour, a few pounds of salt pork, tea, sugar, salt, and an unlimited supply of tobacco—for our friend is a great consumer of the weed, chewing during the day-time, and smoking over his camp-fire at night. All these various articles he packs in his blankets, and with the aid of cords, fastens the bundle knapsack-fashion to his back. Arrived at some old and favourite haunt, he begins by putting the shanty in order. The last year's dried-up hemlock sprigs are removed, and a fresh supply obtained; a good stock of firewood is cut and piled ready for use, and the neighbouring "cachés" (places where the hunters hide boats' stores, traps, &c., to prevent their being stolen) visited. Should he find everything in the same condition in which he left it, our friend rejoices greatly, and loses no time in

commencing operations against the deer. As soon as there is sufficient light, he sallies forth from his shanty, rifle in hand, to look for "sign." He gets over the ground fast, with a long, swinging stride, and he surmounts logs and other obstacles with surprising facility. To look at him loping along, with the eternal quid between his jaws, no one would take him to be what he really is—the best hunter in the district.

Suddenly he stops to examine a bush, which the inexperienced woodsman would have passed by unnoticed. Our still-hunter's practised eye has caught sight of a torn leaf, and he at once perceives that it is the work of a deer; a second glance and he knows that the marks are of recent date—the deer must have passed along that very morning. Cautiously he examines the ground in every direction until, coming to a soft spot, he distinctly sees the imprint of hoofs; and a little further on some fresh droppings make it evident that a deer has passed that way some two hours before. With a light step he follows the trail, the sign getting stronger and stronger as he advances, until some more droppings, not yet cold, warn him that the game is not far distant. The deer being luckily to windward of him, he has no occasion to circle; so, with rifle cocked, and neck outstretched

to catch the least sound, he again noiselessly advances. Not a branch cracks under his foot, nor does a leaf rustle, as he stealthily creeps along; for the slightest noise, and his morning's work would be now altogether lost. Hush! he hears a noise; he stops and listens. Yes, there it is again—the deer must be close at hand; and on tiptoe he steals behind a huge hemlock, and cautiously looks around. If the hunter should happen to be in luck's way, he will perhaps espy from his covert—standing in some open forest glade, with head erect and nostrils distended—the object of his pursuit, anxiously sniffing the wind, for already he scents danger and has half a mind to flee. But not a sound is to be heard; so, partially reassured, he turns round and walks leisurely away, presenting, as he does so, his broadside to the enemy. The next minute he is tearing through the forest, mortally wounded, his track marked by large drops of blood—for the small bullets used by the hunters in the wilderness seldom bring down a deer in his tracks, and the poor brute often covers miles of ground before he falls to rise no more.

The hunter, having reloaded his rifle and taken a fresh chew of tobacco, next proceeds to follow up the trail; and, perhaps after miles of weary

travel, he ultimately finds his victim, stiff and stark, stretched across some log, over which he had fallen in his death throes. After dressing his prize, our hunter generally consults his watch, or the sun if he have none, and calculates whether there be time enough to regain the shanty before sundown. If there be, he shoulders the deer and patiently makes "back-tracks;" if not, he prepares to camp-out for the night. A bough shanty having been erected, to shelter him from the chill night-air, sufficient fuel chopped to last the night, a fire lit, he next proceeds to cut some steaks off the fore-quarters of his deer, and, after making a hearty supper, he lights his pipe, and, stretching himself on his bed of hemlock, with his feet to the fire, ruminates on his day's adventures.

I have tried, in as few words as possible, to describe the manner in which deer are hunted in the Wilderness; and, as one day's sport closely resembles another, I think it would be tedious to give a detailed description of the two months' autumn-shooting that I enjoyed in the St. Regis and Saranac districts; so I will therefore content myself by explaining in a general way to my readers the style of life they will have to lead should they ever favour these woods with a visit.

My guide was by no means a first-rate still-

hunter, so, much to his disgust, I handed him over to the tender mercies of Jones, and put myself under the guidance of the best hunter in the district, who only undertook my tuition as a great favour. He certainly was the most patient of men, and took an infinity of trouble to make me as good a backwoodsman as himself; but with what success his labours were attended it is not for a modest individual like myself to state. His first care was to make me familiar with the "lay" of the country, by explaining to me its chief characteristics, the course of the principal streams, form of the mountains, situation of lakes, &c., and also how to shape my course without compass by marking the moss on the trees and other well known signs. He next taught me to wield an axe, build a fire, and "shanty out," in the most approved backwoods fashion; and lastly, how to kill my deer without having recourse either to hound or lantern.

I am ashamed to say how many weeks elapsed before I killed a deer still-hunting. In vain did I follow my guide's instructions to the very letter, scouring the woods in every direction day after day with a perseverance that deserved success. It was no go! the deer appeared to know instinctively that I was on their tracks, and I could

never manage to get a shot. Morning after morning I would put into my canteen sufficient biscuit, butter, and salt to last me for a couple of days, and start off with a determination not to return to the shanty until I had killed my deer in a sportsmanlike manner. After a couple of hours' hard walking, I would perhaps come upon fresh deer-tracks, and then the whole morning would be spent in following up the trail. Sometimes I would lose sight of it altogether, and then many precious minutes would be spent in circling to the right and left before I could again strike it. Then, again, tracks innumerable were continually crossing the one I would be following up; and, amongst them all, I used to get so bewildered that I generally succeeded in selecting the wrong one, and night would overtake me before I had overtaken the deer, and thus another day's work would be thrown away.

I did, on several occasions, manage to creep so close that I could plainly hear the deer browsing on the bushes as they leisurely walked along; but just at the very moment when I felt sure of at length getting a shot, some unlooked-for accident would invariably arise to prevent it—either a dry branch would crack under my feet, or I would stumble over some confounded log, or something

else would happen to alarm the deer, and they would go bounding away through the forest, leaving me half crazy with rage and disappointment.

But, although unfortunate in my still-hunting it must not be imagined that I had no sport, and that I had to retire night after night supperless to roost: far from it. My shooting-iron as they called it in the woods, had only one barrel rifled, the other being smooth-bore; and the moment that I found no deer were likely to be forthcoming for dinner, I would gently draw the green cartridge and substitute some smaller shot than Eley's SS. There was plenty of small game, and I generally managed to pick up something before it was time to look about for a camping ground. Ruffed grouse, Canada or spruce partridge, an occasional snipe, and plenty of wild duck were to be had; besides, as I always carried fishing tackle, I could, when in the vicinity of a lake, catch a speckled trout or two to furnish forth a meal—and such a meal as few epicures have ever had the chance of enjoying.

About an hour and a half before sundown I would fix upon a camping ground in the vicinity of some spring or rivulet, and, with the aid of an axe (which, together with a large bowie-knife, I carried in my broad leather belt) I would cut down

a few saplings for my wigwam, and some logs for the fire; that accomplished, all my energies would be directed to the solemn task of preparing dinner. On the glowing wood-embers I could cook fish, flesh, and fowl to a turn, without the aid of any *batterie de cuisine;* and what an appetite I had, sharpened as it always was with what Jones used to call "Spartan sauce." A good-sized trout, and a couple of by no means small grouse, used to disappear at a sitting; and how delicious everything tasted! I have eaten dinners in all quarters of the globe; renowned *chefs,* in Paris and Vienna, have superintended the cooking of feasts of which I have partaken, and yet how insipid they all appeared to me after those exquisite little game suppers that I myself prepared in the Wilderness, when a wigwam was my dining-room, and a few blazing logs my kitchen! Whenever the condition of my flask allowed it—which was not always, for one is apt to run short of liquor in the woods—I used to mix myself a stiff night-cap of hot whisky-punch, and enjoy some fragrant "Varginny" until I felt drowsy. Then how I used to sleep! Wolves might howl, and night-owls screech; nothing roused me but the cold night-air, when the fire began to burn low, and then I was of course obliged to rise and pile on

more wood. I got so used to this at last, that I would wake regularly at midnight, make up the fire, smoke a pipe, and fall asleep again; and when I was again obliged to conform to the usages of civilized life, I would be quite angry when I awoke in the night to find that I was in a small close bedroom, where I had no excuse for taking a nocturnal whiff before again composing myself to sleep!

CHAPTER X.

What is "Capital Sport?"—Adventure with a Bear—The Right and the Wrong Way of Blazing—The Wild Animals of the Wilderness—The Mystery of the Wolf Scalps—How a Commissioner lost his Dollars—The best Dog for the Wilderness—A Strange Peculiarity of the Ruffed Grouse—Pigeons and Wild Geese—The North American Woods in Autumn—The Backwoodman's Preparations for Winter—Master and Man—Winter Evenings' Amusements—Snow Pictures—Camping out in Winter—A Terrible Night—A Cold Bath—The Wilderness at its Worst—An Explosion—The Shanty becomes untenantable—Farewell to the Wilderness—Lost in the Wood—The Delights of a Canadian Winter—A few Words on mild Climates.

PUTTING sport aside, it would be well worth any one's while to pay a visit to the Wilderness, were it only for the pleasure of camping out in the manner I have described. The English sportsman, who is obliged to dress for dinner on his return from the hunting field or pheasant covert, can form but a poor idea of the relief one experiences when freed for a time from the irksome restraints of civilized life. I do not for one moment mean to hint that civilization is a thing

to be despised—quite the contrary; but what I do mean to assert is, that to really enjoy life, no half measures must be adopted. One must either luxuriate in Paris, London, or Vienna, participating in every pleasure that money can procure; or else, retiring to a log shanty in the heart of the Wilderness, lead a hunter's life, eat a hunter's food, and enjoy a hunter's rude health and happy contented existence. For my own part, after a six months' sojourn in a city, I always feel a longing after those grand old woods, and heartily wish that I could transport myself once more to the rough shanty on the slopes of the St. Regis. How it arises that our officers quartered in Quebec and Montreal do not more frequently find their way to the St. Regis and Saranac districts, is what I have never been able to understand. Those who have given the Wilderness a trial may have had bad luck, and have, therefore, on their return, reported that there was no game in the district.

And now the question arises—What is supposed to be meant by "plenty of game?" In England killing forty brace of partridges and a couple of brace of hares, and in Scotland the same number of grouse or a couple of stags, would, I suppose, be considered a good day's

work; but in America what amount of success would justify a man in saying that there was "plenty of game" in the district? Our Norfolk squire, walking through his turnip fields, as he pots his birds right and left from covey after covey, smiles complacently at his keeper, and says, "Plenty of partridges this year, Tompkins;" and as pheasants are slaughtered by the hundred in some noble lord's plantations, Fitznoodle of the Plungers gleefully shouts to his brother sub, "Ain't this sport, Jack?" This is our English idea of "capital sport."

I know it is rank heresy to say so, but for my own part I would rather sit quietly on a farm-yard wall and blaze away at the ducks and hens, than take part in what is politely called a battue; for I should have the same amount of sport without running the risk of having my unfortunate carcase riddled with shot by a Cockney sportsman.

Sport, to my mind, does not so much consist in the quantity of game killed, as in the manner in which it is killed; and I find more pleasure in bringing home one deer after a week's, ay, a fortnight's hard hunting, than I would in slaughtering a score from a drawing-room window—but of course this is altogether a matter of taste, "et

de gustibus non disputandum." If, then, to enjoy sport it is absolutely necessary that the game should be as plentiful as in an English park, I strongly advise my reader not to try his luck in the American forests, or he will be sorely disappointed. If, on the contrary, a small amount of success and a large amount of enjoyment will serve his turn, let him go by all means; and may St. Hubert protect him!

I have said that one must be content with a small amount of success. I mean that a novice must; for, although I was not very successful during my first season, that was simply because I was a muff—an old hunter, camped only five miles off, having killed his twenty-one deer still-hunting in four months, and he did not hunt regularly by any means. I mention this to show that the deer are there for any one who knows how to hunt them. Besides, the young woodsman, if very unsuccessful still-hunting, can always command a day's sport without either driving to water or night-hunting, by merely turning the dogs into the woods and taking his station on some "runaway," or path, which the deer are accustomed to follow in making for the water. Even if he do not get a shot, it is pleasant to hear the dogs in full cry, and there is considerable excite-

ment in listening for the approach of the deer—which, by-the-way, is often missed in the flurry of the moment, for there are easier things to hit than a four-year-old buck, tearing along a runaway, with half a dozen dogs at his heels; indeed, he has a very fair chance for his life. But, as I have said before, all hounding is bad, and ought only to be resorted to in extreme cases, for it frightens the deer, and they soon leave for quieter quarters.

It will be seen, then, that the deer, although not as plentiful as blackberries, are still in sufficient numbers to afford a fair amount of sport; and it must be remembered that in the Wilderness there are other tracks to be met with, and larger ones than those made by deer. The black bear is still to be found in the wilder regions, but the hunters seldom devote much time to following up his trail, for it is not a paying game—and even in the Wilderness the American always looks to the almighty dollar. In hunting Bruin it is advisable to be accompanied by a small cur dog, which, by constantly snapping and snarling at Master Bar's heels, will finally force him to "tree;"—once "treed" he presents a capital mark, and there is not much difficulty in bringing him down again with a bullet.

Although I frequently came upon bear tracks, I never had the good fortune to get a shot until my last visit to Canada; and I cannot say that my behaviour then was such as to entitle me to any further success in the bear-hunting line. I was one evening returning to my shanty, after an unsuccessful day's hunt, when I came upon a bear-track which was so fresh that I at once determined to follow it up, even though by so doing I should be obliged to camp out for the night. The trail was distinct enough, for there were a couple of inches of snow on the ground, and I managed to rattle along for an hour or more without a check. But it grew rapidly darker and darker, and I was about giving up the chase for the night, when I was suddenly startled by a low grunt; and casting my eyes in the direction whence the noise proceeded, there, sure enough, was Bruin, his black coat in strong relief against the white, snow-covered ground, as he made tracks with all the speed of which his fat, unwieldy carcase was capable, through a tangled cedar swamp. In a moment I was close to him, and as I shouted he made a half-turn towards me, receiving as he did so the contents of both barrels at a distance of not more than fifteen paces. I of course expected to see him drop where he

stood, but, to my intense disgust, he wheeled round again, and, with a growl of rage, continued his flight through the swamp. I feared at first that I must have missed him altogether, but my mind was soon at rest on that score, for on examining the spot where he had stood, I found the snow covered with his blood, and large drops of gore marked his course through the forest. Hastily ramming down a wire-cartridge, I started in pursuit at the double; but it was so dark, that had it not been for the glare of the snow, I should have been unable to distinguish the tracks, and every moment I kept stumbling over fallen trees and roots as, mad with excitement, I tore through the dense thicket after my victim, leaving my shooting-coat hanging in shreds to the bushes which obstructed my advance. Clambering over a large fallen tree—which had evidently been no slight obstacle to the wounded bear, for it was covered with blood—my foot slipped, and to my horror I found myself almost on the top of the shaggy rascal himself. My heart stopped beating with fright, for I expected every moment to feel his paw on my scalp; and I was unable to defend myself against an attack, for my rifle had slipped from my grasp as I fell, my bowie-knife was no longer in its sheath, and before I could

have unbuckled the case of my axe, Bruin would have made mincemeat of me. I was in what the Americans call a "tarnation fix." All that I could do was to hold my breath and be ready for a bolt, should his lordship think proper to tackle me. This state of things continued for some minutes. I anxiously listened for the slightest move on the part of my most disagreeable neighbour, but he made none; so I at length summoned up sufficient courage to gently raise my head and take a survey of the "situation." I could just distinguish at the distance of a couple of yards from where I lay, a dark mass, which I knew instinctively to be Master Bar; and although he did not move, I thought it was just possible that he might be "playing 'possum" and quietly watching his chance to let me feel the weight of his paw. I was not, however, going to be done in that manner, so I quietly edged myself away until there were at least a dozen yards between us, when, feeling myself once again in comparative safety, I rose to my feet, drew my axe from its case, and boldly faced the enemy. The enemy, however, did not "show up," so I took courage and cautiously advanced on tiptoe until I was again close alongside his prostrate carcase. He appeared to be as motionless as ever; but even

then I was not quite reassured, and I gave him repeated pokes with the handle of my axe ere I ventured to put my hand on his still warm body: but when I did so I found that poor Bruin was indeed dead and incapable of further mischief. Great, indeed, was my self-gratulation as I felt his thick, soft coat—and it was only when the excitement had in some degree passed away that it suddenly occurred to me that I had not the remotest idea of where I was, nor was there the slightest chance of getting the bear to the shanty now that I had killed him. This was certainly disheartening, and, to make matters worse, my canteen was empty; so as I could not make up my mind to try a slice of bear-meat, nothing remained but to light a roaring fire, and endeavour to forget my hunger in sleep.

It snowed heavily during the night, and in the morning I found that all my footprints had been filled up, so that I could not make "back-tracks," as I had hoped to be able to do. I calculated, however, that I must be some six miles to the southward of my shanty; and I at once determined to strike a course due north, "blazing" the trees as I went along, so that I might have no trouble in retracing my steps to where the bear lay. This tree-blazing was a favourite practice

of mine in the woods, and got me into scrapes innumerable. When a hunter finds out some short cut between two well known points, he strips here and there a small piece of bark from the trunks of the trees, in order to mark the line, and this is called "blazing." Now, I got into the very bad habit of blazing the trees without having any definite object in view, and the consequence was, that whenever a poor devil had the misfortune to take one of my lines, he generally found that the blaze ended in some out-of-the-way place from which it was no easy matter to extricate himself, and he would most probably have to camp-out instead of returning to his shanty. This happened so frequently during my stay in the woods, that it at length became a standing joke, and whenever a man lost his way, they would ask him whether he hadn't followed one of that darned Englishman's lines, which began nowhere and ended about the same place..

But, to make a long story short, after carefully covering up my bear, I did make a due northerly course, blazing the trees as I advanced; and, had I only kept on, my journey would have been terminated at the north pole, for I had miscalculated my position, and it was not before the evening of the following day that I found myself once more

at the shanty. The bear was, however, eventually found, and, after no end of trouble and expense, he was safely transported to an artist's studio to be painted. He was, unfortunately, kept too long, and when he was stripped of his hide, all the hair dropped out, and his beautiful coat was, to my extreme mortification, ruined for ever.

My bear-hunting experiences have taken me far away from my camping-ground on the St. Regis, so let me return to the enumeration of the various kinds of wild animals to be met with in the Wilderness. Next to the bear, I may mention the wolf. Many a night, when camped out in some unfrequented part of the Wilderness, I have heard his prolonged melancholy howl close to where I lay; but no sooner did I stretch out my hand for my rifle, than off he would go like a shot. His race has been so persecuted for years past that he is as cunning as the devil. He can detect poison where a member of the Apothecaries' Hall would fail; traps and pitfalls he espies at a glance; and he scents the presence of man as easily as the vulture does carrion.

Some twenty or thirty years ago, this Wilderness was so infested with wolves that a large reward was offered by Government for each scalp taken. In those days, there dwelt at "Chateauguay Four-

corners" a certain Harry Hillyker, who was, by all accounts, the most successful wolf-hunter ever seen in Franklin County. The amount of money paid to that man for wolf-scalps would have been sufficient to stock half the farms in the district; and it at length became such a considerable item in the annual Government accounts for the county, that the powers at Albany began to "smell mice," and they at once determined to send a special commissioner to Chateauguay, for the purpose of clearing up, if possible, the wolf mystery. Now the real truth of the matter was simply that Harry Hillyker and the magistrate who paid the wolf-bounties were in league, sharing the profits derived from their rascality, which consisted in making the Government pay the bounty on a hundred wolves when perhaps one had been really killed; for the magistrate had only to send his voucher as to the number of bounties paid, and he was immediately reimbursed by the State agent at Albany. Things were in this state then, when one fine winter's evening the commissioner made his appearance at Chateauguay, and took up his abode (*incog.*, of course,) at the small village tavern. Now, as luck would have it, it just happened that Master Harry was "liquoring up" at the tavern bar when the commissioner

stalked in and took his seat by the fire;—but I must give the upshot of his visit in poor Harry's own words.

"Wal, ye see, Captain, no sooner did I clap eyes on the cuss, nor I made up my mind that he warn't here arter no good, for he seemed a kinder uneasy, and kept a-turning round every time the door opened, as if he war a-looking for some one. He had not been thar five minutes when I sot my chair alongside of hisn, and tried to get him into conversation. But he warn't talkative, and it took me a good two hours or more before I struck the right trail. I had talked of farming and preaching, fighting and lumbering, electioneering and horse-dealing—it warn't no use; and I was about giving him up, when one of the boys accidentally said something about wolf-hunting. You should jist have seen my gentleman's face—he cocked his ears, and his eyes fairly started out of his head. I had him on the right beat at last.

"'Wolves!' says he with a grin; 'air thar any wolves in Franklin County?'

"'Air thar any snakes in Virginny!' sez I. 'Why, in course thar is; ain't the whole township alive with 'em? You can hear them a-

screeching and a-yelling every night regular, from this very door-step.'

"'Oh, yer can, can yer?' growls he, looking as wise as an owl in the daylight; 'then it's my belief that thar ain't nary a wolf within ten miles of the "Corners," nor a hundred in the whole of the Franklin County.'

"'You wouldn't like to back that opinion of yourn?' asks I, quite innocent like; 'you wouldn't feel inclined to give me odds, perhaps, that I couldn't trap a wolf afore mornin' within five hundred yards of the meetin'-house door; or air you afeard of losing yer dollars?'

"'Afeard of losing hell!' says he, a getting quite riled; 'I'll bet yer five hundred dollars to fifty that you don't catch a wolf within a mile of the Corners, let alone at the meetin'-house door. Will them odds suit yer?'

"'First-rate,' says I; 'and now, afore we do anything more, suppose we first deposit the "dimes" with the boss yonder; he'll be stake-holder and see fair play.' Wal, although the cuss didn't appear half to like the spry way in which I tuk up the bet, he did stump up the 'shin-plasters,' and the whole crowd started off to see me set the trap.

"Now you see, Capting, I knew as well as he

did, that thar warnt no wolves about the Corners; but as luck would have it, I had a few days previous trapped a big slut wolf, and as she warn't much hurt, I thought I would take her home and try if I couldn't get a litter or two out of her, afore I knocked her on the head. I knew right well, when I made the bet, that Marm Wolf was snug in my barn, and I felt pretty safe of my five hundred dollars. Wal, the trap was sot, and we all went back to the tavern; and arter a bit, my gentleman takes his candle and goes to bed, promising to visit the trap with me first thing in the mornin'. In about an hour's time one of the boys and myself goes to the barn, gets the wolf, carries her right away to the trap, and leaves her in it as natural as could be. Next mornin' Mr. Commissioner comes to my house at daybreak—

"'Now, Harry,' sez he, 'let us see how many of these wolves have been to your trap in the night-time. Don't yer think we had better take my waggon with us to bring 'em back?'

"Wal, I made as if I wanted to be off the bet, but he wouldn't listen to it; so, looking as miserable as I well could, I accompanied him to the trap, and there, sure enough, was the wolf as safe as when I left her the night afore. It had

been snowing hard; all our tracks was covered up, and I thought at first that I had pretty well mystified my gentleman; but he was a darned 'cute Yankee,' and he read me like a book. He examined the ground, and then he looked at the trap; but it was only when he came to inspect Marm Wolf herself that I knew the murder was fairly out. There she stood, with as many straws a-sticking to her as you'd find quills on a porcupine, her muzzle besmeared with the mush she had eaten for supper, and the wounds which she had received when first trapped not even healed up. I must own when my friend found that he had been done, he bore it so well, that I felt half inclined to give him back his money.

"'Harry,' sez he, 'I've been sold this time; but the game's up, and I advise you for the future to find some more profitable and honest occupation than wolf-hunting.'

"Nary another word did he say. He went straight back to the inn, had his horse hitched to, and we never sot eyes on him again at Chateauguay Four-corners; but he had spoken the truth about wolf-trapping—from that date the bounties were paid in a different way, and the wolves all at once disappeared from Franklin County in the most unaccountable manner."

Wolves are now hunted in that country much in the same way as they are in Russia. The whole township turns out, and a circle is formed round that section of the forest where the wolves are supposed to have their lair. At a given signal the hunters advance on the centre, and the circle is thus gradually lessened and lessened until the wolves are completely hemmed in; and they are shot down as they make frantic efforts to break through the "cordon" of watchers, who rarely allow them, however, to escape intact. Fifteen dollars are, I believe, still paid for each wolf-scalp; but the tax, I am told, does not fall so heavily on the county as in the days of Master Harry Hillyker.

The most dangerous animal to be met with in the Wilderness is the American panther, or "painter," or "catamount," as he is called by the hunters. He must be a decidedly ugly varmint to come across if one is to believe all the stories of his misdeeds which one hears in the woods; but I am inclined to believe that, unless cornered, he would be more disposed to run than to act on the offensive. I only saw one during my stay in the woods, and that was on a bitterly cold December day, whilst fishing through the ice on a lake in the Chateauguay country. He was about to cross

the ice some quarter of a mile from where I was standing, but the instant I shouted at him, and he espied me, he turned tail, and rushed back into the woods again as if the devil were after him. He did not seem such a very formidable customer —hardly larger, I should say, than a good-sized mastiff; but, on examining his tracks, I found that his paws were nearly twice the breadth of those of any ordinary dog; and I have no doubt he could make use of them when occasion required.

Another of the feline tribe, the wild cat, is, I believe, also to be found in these woods, but never having seen one, dead or alive, I cannot speak positively either as to its appearance or habits.

Amongst the smaller animals hunted for the sake of their fur I may mention foxes, fisher, otter, sable, and mink, which are to be met with all over the Wilderness, although not in sufficient numbers to make trapping in itself a remunerative occupation. The hunters, however, set traps in any likely spot they may see, and visit them when after larger game; and as fur is dear—fisher being worth 7 dollars, and mink 3 dollars 50 cents the skin—they manage to pick up a considerable amount of money in the course of

the season. The beaver has almost deserted the rivers and streams of this wild region; but since the introduction of silk hats, his fur has become of so little value that I very much doubt whether he would be worth trapping, even were he as abundant as formerly. His half-brother, the musk-rat, is killed annually in great numbers on the different tributaries of the St. Lawrence; but neither is his fur of much value, and it is the quantity, not the quality, that pays. When hunting with dogs, the two animals most to be dreaded are the skunk and the hedgehog. The effluvium from any dog that has been in the vicinity of a skunk, if once smelt, can never be forgotten; it is the condensed essence of all the stinks of Cologne, Lyons, and Constantinople thrice multiplied; and should a hound tackle his fellow-torment, the hedgehog, it is an entire morning's work to extract the quills from the poor brute's neck and muzzle.

While on this subject it may as well be mentioned that the ordinary class of sporting dogs—setters, pointers, and such like—are of little or no use in these woods, the trees being too close, and the underbrush too thick to allow of the movements being seen at any distance. The best sort

of dog to have with one is a small cocking spaniel, more especially should the larder be so empty as to render a day's pot-hunting imperative.

There is one peculiarity about the ruffed grouse which makes that bird, more than any other, the particular spoil of the pot-hunter, and it is this: the bark of a dog has such a peculiar fascination for this species, that should your spaniel commence barking at the foot of a tree on which any of these birds are perched, they will sit without attempting to fly, whilst you keep blazing away at each one in succession—always remembering to begin with the one nearest to you.

This is almost as bad as rook-shooting in England; but it must be borne in mind that deer-hunting and trout-fishing are the only two sports which can really be enjoyed to perfection in this Wilderness, all others being of secondary consideration. One may, indeed, pick up a few brace of birds or a couple of hares in the course of a day's ramble through the beech woods; but if the sportsman desires to find birds in any quantity, he had much better pack up his traps and start off to the western prairies, or take a fortnight's duck-shooting amongst the islands in the St. Lawrence. At that season of the year, however, when the pigeon family migrate south-

wards, any one who is fond of burning powder can do it to his heart's content. For days together the woods are alive with these birds, and they are netted in considerable quantities by the settlers, who cannot afford to waste powder and shot on such small game; but any one who is not so circumstanced can of course blaze away from morning till night, and kill any number of them, without stirring from the vicinity of his shanty. A little later in the season, especially before a severe winter, large flocks of wild geese are seen flying southwards; but they seldom alight, and keep at such an altitude as to render a shot out of the question. Wild ducks are to be found all the year round; but, as I have said before, to enjoy duck-shooting to perfection, the sportsman must take up his quarters in the late autumn on the banks of the St. Lawrence, or one of its tributaries.

Late autumn is the time when these grand old North American woods are to be seen in their greatest splendour, when the trees of the forest are arrayed in their robes of purple, and scarlet, and yellow, and the landscape lies as if "new created in all the freshness of childhood." How shall I describe an Indian summer, or find words to portray the gorgeous picture which an

American forest presents to the eye at the turn of the leaf in the month of October?

Let my reader imagine himself quietly floating with me, in my birch-bark canoe, on the glassy bosom of the St. Regis Lake, on some fine afternoon during this Indian summer. In front of us, arrayed in a resplendent autumn dress of scarlet and gold, rises the St. Regis mountain; the bright scarlet of the maple, and rich golden tints of the beech, rendered more brilliantly vivid by contrast with the deep greens of pine and hemlock. The whole mountain-side is one mass of brilliant colouring, and, reflected in the water, it looks more like some fiery tropical sunset than an American forest scene. A slight haze softens the outlines of the landscape, and on the still, balmy air every sound is borne with marvellous distinctness. One's enjoyment would be complete, were it not for the knowledge that this deep repose and stillness is the calm which precedes death—the death of the year—the advent of an American winter.

But the man who cannot be happy to-day because a cloud hangs over the morrow is but a poor philosopher: so let us run the boat ashore, and see how the woods look during the Indian

summer. What a deathlike stillness prevails! not a sound to be heard but the rustling of the chipmonks and squirrels amongst the fallen leaves, or the distant drumming of ruffed grouse, or tap of a woodpecker. Now is the season of plenty—the deer are in the primest condition; Bruin has accumulated sufficient fat to support him during his approaching hibernation; and the squirrels have stored up an adequate supply of beech-nuts to last them until spring-time comes again. Although the forest does not now present the same gorgeous mass of colouring as when seen from the water, it is none the less lovely; the tints are more varied and better harmonized, and the soft green of the moss is most delightfully refreshing to the eye. The air is filled with the fragrant odour of decaying leaves; and I imagine that even the unsavoury skunk must be less objectionable at this most delightful season of the year. The brooks appear to run more joyously, the water in the woodland springs to sparkle more brilliantly than in the preceding months; and as we step over the springy turf we feel renewed health and vigour. We must make the most of our time—every minute snatched from sleep is a precious minute gained, for at no distant date we shall retire for the night, and on

waking in the morning find ourselves face to face with an American winter.

Father Winter in America is a much more imperious and decided old gentleman than he is with us in England. On the abdication of Autumn, he at once takes his seat on his throne of ice, and, dispensing with the services of his English "aides," Fog and Sleet, informs his subjects of his accession by throwing a snowy mantle over his inheritance. His reign is only dreaded by those weak and sickly offsprings of luxury and ease, whose precious carcases can bear no exposure to the weather. The hardy backwoodsman cares not for his approach, and makes few preparations to receive him. A fourth side is added to the shanty, a rough door and window are constructed, and a rude sheet-iron stove is stuck in one corner of the room; nothing more is necessary—the hunter's winter-quarters are complete.

Towards the close of the Indian summer, I left the St. Regis, and built myself a winter shanty on the banks of a small lake in the Chateauguay district. Jones left me about this time, and for six weeks or more my guide and myself lived together on terms of the most perfect equality. He did agree to play second fiddle, but it was only after a fair

stand-up fight, in which he got well licked, that he at length showed me that small amount of respect and obedience which I thought I had a right to demand. When I remember the easy way in which I took things in those days, I cannot help laughing. The first trouble every morning used to be the rousing of Master "Eb;" and a deuced difficult matter it was, too, for he was as lazy as a pig, and no amount of kicking would stir him. There he would lie, coiled up in his rug, like a huge boa, perfectly indifferent as to which of us made the breakfast, and deaf to all expostulation. I found at last that a piece of ice dropped down his neck had the effect of rousing him when other means failed; but it was a dangerous practice, for he used to get so frantic whenever I did so, that I never felt safe from a sudden attack. Then there used to be a bother about the breakfast; there was always something sure to be wrong—either the coffee-canister was lost, or a hole had been burned in the frying-pan, or there was no salt; there never seemed to be an end to Eb's misfortunes. After breakfast he would nearly drive me wild by delaying the start on one pretence or another; so that we rarely got fairly under way before ten o'clock, when he would lazily saunter off in one direction to look after his traps,

whilst I would scour the hard-wood country in search of deer or anything else I could pick up for the larder. But whatever may have been Eb's failings, and they were not a few, I cannot say that he was an extravagant retainer. A very little satisfied him; and as he almost cleared his expenses by trapping and hunting, I may say that I had his services for nothing. Eb's greatest delight was to sit down after a successful day's hunting, and have what he called a "hand at keards." "All fours" was his favourite game; and I fear that if any of my English friends had seen me seated in that rude shanty, with my shirt-sleeves rolled up for greater freedom, dealing with a dirty, greasy pack of cards to my by no means aristocratic guide, they would have had just cause to cut me then and for ever. Two tallow candles stuck in old whisky bottles threw a light on the tea-chest which did duty as a card-table—that elegant piece of furniture being still further adorned by a couple of tin pannikins, out of which it was our custom to drink our evening's allowance of whisky punch, glasses not being the fashion in the Wilderness. Our housekeeping was not conducted on a very grand scale, but we were comfortable and cosy. The shanty was not more

than ten feet square, and the stove, which we generally kept at a red heat, was amply sufficient to keep it warm, in spite of the cold wind that found its way through the ill-fitting door and window. Indeed, I enjoyed this portion of my sojourn in the woods excessively: all that I missed was Jones's cheerful face when I returned to the shanty in the evening.

The time never hung heavily on my hands, for I had quite sufficient to occupy me from sunrise to sunset. Every morning immediately after breakfast I would put on three or four pair of thick woollen stockings and buckskin moccasins (I never wore boots in the snow), and, shouldering my rifle, start in the direction of some beech ridges which lay three miles off, or for any other spot where I thought deer were likely to be found. Nothing could be more delightful than these winter rambles through the forest. True, there was no longer the soft verdure of early summer, nor the brilliant colouring of autumn; but there was in lieu thereof what, to me at least, appeared equally lovely—forests, mountains, lakes, looking dazzling white in the bright winter sunshine; green pines, spruce cedars, and hemlock, bending beneath their wreaths of snow; huge fantastic icicles pendant from every bough,

and glittering showers of hoar frost falling around me as I passed along. Besides, those pests of summer, the mosquitoes, black flies, and gnats, were no longer there to detract from my pleasure; and as I inhaled the sharp frosty air, and heard the crisp snow crackle under my feet, I felt more exhilarated and in ruder health than I had done since my first introduction to the Wilderness.

My hunting experiences, likewise, were more satisfactory. It was an easy matter to follow up a track in the snow, and I had, therefore, fewer misadventures and a greater number of shots than during my autumn still-hunting. I cannot boast that I killed all the deer that I might have done, but I felt that I was improving; and that in itself was sufficient to balance even a larger amount of ill-luck than fell to my lot. I was forced to camp out on several occasions at this inclement season, although I always tried my best to reach home before nightfall; my warm snug shanty, and the game of "keards" with Eb, being more to my taste than a bed of damp hemlock boughs and a solitary supper—enlivened, perhaps, by the melancholy howl of some half-starved wolf in the vicinity. I generally managed to light a fire and cook my bit of supper without

much difficulty; but during the night my troubles would be neither few nor far between. Half a dozen times, at the very least, would I have to emerge from beneath my warm rug to pile fresh wood on the fire—for I could not sleep when it burnt low; then half an hour would be lost before I could get warm again; and as it was so intensely cold for two hours before daybreak that sleep was out of the question, I cannot say that, on the whole, my reminiscences of those winter campings out are agreeably impressed on my memory.

On one occasion I so nearly lost the number of my mess that I never think of the occurrence without a shudder. It was during some intensely cold weather, just before Christmas, that I one morning struck a deer-track, which I followed up unsuccessfully until late in the afternoon; and as I could not return to the shanty, I determined to make for an old deserted log-house, which I knew lay somewhere in that direction. I found it sooner than I anticipated, and not having anything for supper, I thought I would try whether I could not catch a few fish before sundown, since there happened to be some bait in my wallet. Now in the lake near to which this hut was built, there was a certain spot where I felt certain I

could catch a trout if a trout were to be caught at all; and thither I wended my way, axe in hand, and was soon busily engaged cutting holes through the ice. A small brook discharged itself into the lake at this point, and the ice was so thin that in the midst of my labours a great piece gave way, and down I went, axe and all, up to my shoulders in the icy water. I was so benumbed with the cold that I wonder how I ever managed to scramble out and reach the shore in safety; but I did so, and my clothes were frozen as stiff as boards in ten minutes. My first impulse was to rush off in the direction of the log-house, and I was close to it before it struck me that I had no wood cut, and that my axe was quietly reposing at the bottom of the lake in five feet of water. It was rapidly growing dark, and to add to my misfortunes, all my matches were wet, and I could not even have the luxury of a pipe to cheer me in my affliction. What was to be done I knew not. I tried to get a light by firing my rifle into a heap of the driest leaves I could collect—but it was no use, everything was damp; and the lining of my cap, which was the only dry thing on me, was thick flannel, and would not burn. I had been walking all day, and felt drowsy enough; but I knew that

my life depended upon remaining awake, and to accomplish this it was absolutely necessary to keep moving; so up and down in front of that ruined shanty did I keep walking the entire night, for fifteen long hours, which appeared to me like so many years. My tottering legs kept moving mechanically over the frozen ground on which every moment I expected to sink to rise no more. How I ever got through that dreadful night is more than I can say. I think I must have been so benumbed that I felt no pain. If I had done so I should in all probability have made up my mind for the worst, and quietly gone to sleep. As it was, I kept on hour after hour till daylight came; and when the sun at length made its appearance over the distant mountains, I knew that my trials were nearly over and that my life was saved. On entering the shanty I found an old tin box, in which were half-a-dozen matches (what would I not have given for one of them twelve hours before!) and in a few minutes I managed to light a small fire. But I knew that a small fire would hardly dry my clothes, and to build a large one I wanted an axe. I could not, I thought, be much colder than I was, so, without giving myself time to consider the consequences, I rushed down to the lake, broke

the ice over the spot where I knew my axe lay, and jumped into the water. I luckily succeeded in finding it at once, and was back again at the shanty in less than ten minutes. To make a long story short, I was not long in building a roaring fire, at which I soon thawed both myself and my clothes, and after making a hearty meal off a couple of birds which I shot close to the hut, I lay down to rest my wearied body, and slept off and on for nearly twenty hours. The next day I made "back tracks," and reached our own shanty in safety; but I nearly frightened Eb out of his wits, for I looked so pale and haggard that, when I opened the door, the poor fellow thought it was my ghost. It had been a close shave with me, certainly; but no ill effects resulted, and it was, I am thankful to say, the only disagreeable adventure that I ever met with in the Wilderness.

Once, indeed, at the beginning of the winter, when the first film of ice had just made its appearance on the lake, I was for a few minutes in a most disagreeable predicament; but my troubles were nothing in comparison with those I have just narrated. The dogs having, on the occasion to which I allude, driven a remarkably fine old buck into the water, I thought it would be a pity to lose him, so jumping into my boat,

I started in pursuit. I was soon close enough for a shot, and steadying the boat, I took aim at the back part of his head and fired. I thought from the way he plunged that my shot had taken effect, so pulling alongside of him, I caught hold of his horns, and was about to pass my knife across his throat, when with a sudden toss of his head he upset my equilibrium and sent me flying into the water. It was as nearly as possible in the centre of the lake, and being encumbered with a thick shooting-coat and heavy boots, I knew I could never reach the shore by swimming; and my boat was so crank that if I had attempted to clamber in I should have upset it to a certainty. Luckily my mishap had been seen by Master Eb, who immediately shoved off the other boat and came to my assistance; but before he thought of pulling me out of the freezing water, he coolly despatched the deer, which, being only slightly wounded, had nearly made good its escape.

These little misadventures, even should they have, as in my case, a nearly fatal termination, are eagerly devoured, and told and retold, with numerous variations, by the rough, sporting fraternity of the Wilderness, as they sit over their camp fires at night; for a new story added to their repertory is considered a real godsend,

and the principal actor in it is, for the time, a man of no small importance.

From the description I have given of the aspect of the Wilderness in winter, it must not be supposed that the clear, frosty, sunshiny weather of which I have spoken is of any very long duration. Far from it. I have given the bright side of the picture, and there is a very gloomy reverse. When a spell of really severe weather sets in, and a storm bursts over this Wilderness, I do not think a drearier prospect could well be found were one to search the world over. The wind howls through the forest, and the great trees groan as they bend their heads to the icy blast; clouds of blinding snow are whirled aloft into the air, and the whole face of nature is enshrouded in the deepest gloom. To see one of these wintry storms in all its grandeur, the best position the spectator can select is on the shores of some broad sheet of water, across which the wind can sweep with full fury; and it is a picture which, if once seen, will not easily be forgotten. The fierce wind having swept the snowflakes from off the branches of the trees, the forest presents a totally different appearance, and, seen across the white surface of the lake, looks bare, bleak, and black as Erebus. When viewed at

night, the effect is heightened by the unearthly glare of the snow; and during severe frost, the monotonous wail of the forest is varied by frequent sharp reports, as the solid ice cracks from one end of the lake to the other, with a noise resembling a distant salvo of artillery.

But even this severe weather brings with it a certain amount of enjoyment. Any one who has not looked upon such a dreary scene as I have described can hardly imagine what an increased sense of enjoyment one feels as, shutting close the door of the shanty, one again sits down by the roaring fire and listens to the storm rage without. These severe storms rarely last for any length of time; and in twenty-four hours the change that takes place is often such as to make it difficult to understand how, in so short a space of time, the landscape can have undergone so great an alteration. A calm has succeeded the tempests of yesterday, the trees are once more white with snow, and that forest which lately appeared so black and gloomy, glitters in the silvery rays of a winter's moon.

But my sojourn in the woods was brought to an abrupt conclusion, and in a manner that I little anticipated. The shanty was heated, as I have before stated, by a stove, which it was Master Eb's

especial care to fire up to a red heat before he coiled himself up in the folds of his blanket for his first nap, so that the evil hour when he would have to rouse himself up to pile on more fuel, might be delayed as long as possible; and on pegs driven into the walls were suspended our rifles, axes, powder-flasks, and whatever else it was desirable should be kept dry. On the memorable night which fate had decreed should be the last we were to spend in that section of the Wilderness, I was suddenly aroused from my peaceful slumbers by a tremendous explosion right over my head, and, starting to my feet, a sight met my eyes which would have upset the equanimity of a Junot. A good half of the back roof of the shanty had been completely blown away, and the upper logs of one of the walls displaced, whilst the overturned stove had set fire to the dry hemlock twigs with which the floor was covered, and the whole place was in a blaze. After the first feeling of alarm had in a measure subsided, I could hardly, notwithstanding the devastation around me, forbear laughing. There was Eb, sleeping away as unconcernedly as if nothing had happened, his boots and moccasins, which he had placed near the stove to dry, being meanwhile rapidly converted into cinders, whilst large flakes of snow fell through

the open roof, and the wind whistled through the disunited walls, apprising me, in the most unmistakeable manner, that a Chateauguay storm raged without in full fury. My mirth was, however, of short duration, for I saw at a glance that if I desired to save my property, not a moment was to be lost in extinguishing the flames; so, with an effectually-planted kick, I awoke Eb, who was well nigh stupefied with fright when he saw the true state of affairs, and the havoc that his carelessness had occasioned. There was, unluckily, no water at hand, but Eb was equal to the emergency. Seizing a large shovel, he burst open the door of the shanty and set to work pitching in the snow with an energy of which I thought him incapable. His labours were soon crowned with success, the flames were extinguished, but the shanty was no longer habitable. Our soft bed of hemlock was saturated with water, the pipes of the stove hopelessly twisted, whilst the place was so filled with the fumes of charred wood and gunpowder as to be almost unbearable. On lighting a candle and taking a view of the situation, the origin of the catastrophe was soon discovered. The heat of the stove had ignited the bark of the log against which my guide had carelessly suspended a large wooden contrivance, which he called

his "powder-horn." This precious work of art had, it appeared, likewise caught fire, and an explosion was the consequence. It luckily happened that all that remained of the two pounds of powder which it was supposed to hold did not, at the time of the explosion amount to more than four or five ounces, otherwise the results might have been serious; and even as it was the mischief done was irreparable. Most awful was the face poor Eb pulled when he discovered the charred relics of his boots and moccasins, and most bitter his lamentations over the fragments of his beloved powder-horn—even the promise of better articles of the same description from Montreal failed to console him for their loss.

After a considerable amount of trouble we succeeded in lighting a fire in one corner of the shanty, over which we cowered during the remainder of the night, and at break of day we commenced making our final preparations prior to bidding adieu to the scene of disaster. These were soon completed, for we had already dug a *cache*, wherein to hide the more valuable portion of our housekeeping utensils, and the packing of our personal effects was not a very protracted operation. Long, therefore, before the sun was supposed to make his appearance over the distant

hills we were floundering through the deep snow in the direction of the "Corners," Eb complaining most bitterly at having to tramp along without having even so much as a pair of moccasins to protect his by no means tender feet.

A couple of hours after our departure the storm, which had for a while abated, burst upon us with redoubled fury, and the descending snow-flakes so darkened the air that at times even Eb's experienced eye failed to detect the "blaze." Our progression was the reverse of rapid, for the snow was fully two feet in depth, whilst the pack and rifle with which we were each of us laden did not add to the rapidity of our movements. In a direct line the Lower Chateauguay Lake was but thirteen miles from the shanty, and we had hoped to cover the distance before nightfall. But never was the truth of the old adage—"Misfortunes never come singly," more fully exemplified than in our case, for, as will soon be seen, another dreadful night was in store for us. Mid-day found us a good six miles from our destination, and the snow, if possible, descending faster than ever. It was not a cheery look-out by any means, for the last half of our road lay through a broken line of country, which it was no easy matter to traverse even in the best

of weathers, and four hours' trudging up to my knees in snow had well nigh exhausted all the stamina and confidence with which I had so recently set forth. I would willingly have camped for the night in the rude shanty where we had lunched, for there, at least, we were in a measure sheltered from the storm; but Eb was for "keeping along," as he called it, and for once, unfortunately, I allowed myself to be biassed by his judgment and advice, and for four weary hours we did keep along accordingly, now floundering up to our waists in the deep drifts, now stumbling over fallen trees and boulders, which the snow had hid from sight, until we at length found ourselves on the shores of the Upper, instead of the Lower Chateauguay Lake, Eb having managed to strike the wrong line, as I was fully prepared to hear that he had done, his answers to my repeated inquiries relative to our whereabouts having been for some time exceedingly vague and unsatisfactory. It was already dusk, and as any further attempt to reach the hotel on the lower lake was out of the question, nothing remained but to make ourselves as snug for the night as circumstances permitted, and wait patiently until the storm in some degree abated before venturing on a fresh start. My drooping spirits were somewhat cheered

by Eb's assuring me that there was an old shanty close at hand; and after groping about for half an hour or more in the dark we did at length succeed in finding it, but it proved, on inspection, to be in such a dilapidated condition that, for all the shelter it offered, we might just as well have camped outside. Door there was none, and a huge drift of snow blocked up the entrance, whilst every wind of heaven found an ingress through the ill-made walls and fissured roof of the wretched hovel. Even Eb, than whom no man could rough it better when occasion required, seemed dejected when he saw the utter desolation that reigned around; and it was with a muttered curse at his bad luck that he threw his pack and rifle on the ground, and set to work pitching out the snow with the head of an old flour-barrel for a shovel. By the time his labours were completed I had split off sufficient dry chips from the walls of the shanty to build a fire, and a blanket having been securely fastened across the doorway so as to exclude the icy blast, we opened our packs and prepared to weather out the night. And a precious long night it was, too; for what with the melted snow water which kept dropping from the roof, and the cold winds that whistled through the interstices of the rude walls, and the

smoke with which the place was filled, and other grievous afflictions altogether too numerous for recapitulation, sleep was not to be thought of, and when morning at length came, both Eb and myself agreed that a dash would have to be made for the lower lake at all hazards. The storm still howled through the woods, and the snow was considerably deeper than on the previous evening, but Eb managed to steer clear of the drifts, and after three hours' wading the desired haven hove in sight, and my backwoods experiences were for the time ended.

It was on a beautiful morning that I bid adieu to the Wilderness. The storm had died away, and from a sky of turquoise blue the bright December sun looked down on the dear old woods, now dazzling white under their canopy of freshly-fallen snow. Merrily rang the sleigh-bells as we glided over the frozen ground, and most exhilarating was the cold bracing air from the St. Regis, which I was inhaling, alas! for the last time. Most exciting it is, no doubt, to carry on in a smart craft, when you are in momentary expectation of seeing your topmast snap like a pipe-stem, and a good burst with a pack of English fox-hounds is capital sport in its way; but, to my

mind there are few enjoyments equal to that which one experiences when being whirled over the snow by a pair of fast stepping horses on one of those cold bright days which gladden a Canadian winter. Nestled in a pile of buffalo robes, with one's head and hands protected by fur cap and gloves, the intense cold is scarcely appreciable, whilst the rapid motion through the clear frosty air causes an exhilaration which it is impossible to describe. How different it is to a winter's drive along a muddy turnpike road in our own favoured land! Instead of the murky depressing atmosphere of Old England, there is a clear blue sky overhead, and a sun which, if not absolutely heat-imparting, is at least pleasant to look at. Instead of the tramp of horses and the rattle of wheels is heard the joyous tinkling of sleigh bells, and the crackling of the hardened snow beneath the smooth runners of the sleigh, whilst silvery showers of hoar frost fall from the trees in lieu of the drenching rain drops of the mother country. Talk of going to Nice for the winter indeed, when Canada is but a twelve days' journey from our foggy shores; not if I know it. Southern latitudes may do all very well for consumptive patients whom bungling physicians wish to get rid of; but

for any man in the enjoyment of good health there is, to my mind, no place to winter in like Canada.

It is the greatest mistake to suppose that anything is gained by wintering in what is termed a "mild climate." There is nothing of the sort. Will any one that has wintered in Nice, Hyeres, or any other mild retreat recommended by the faculty, venture to assert that the advantages gained were not more than counterbalanced by the many discomforts which had to be put up with? I think not. So long as the sun shines and the weather keeps bright and warm, it is certainly delightful *out of doors;* but when the sky becomes overcast, and the "mistral" or the "tramontana" confines one to *the house,* how truly wretched and miserable everything looks! The wind finds its way through the ill-made doors and windows; the fire imparts no heat, although consuming four francs' worth of wood per diem; and the poor wanderer in search of a mild winter's residence, as he shivers over the expiring embers, thinks with a sigh of the bright sea-coal fires of his native land, and curses all mild climates from the bottom of his heart. It may appear paradoxical, but, if a man desires to keep warm in winter, he must go to a cold climate—if cool in

summer, to a warm one; and the reason of this is easily explained. In warm climates the houses are built so as to exclude the heat, in cold ones to retain it; and before now I have seen Russians and Canadians shivering at Nice, and Italians complaining of the heat in London and Paris. I know that I spent a considerable portion of two winters in Canada, and not only did I manage on both occasions to keep myself warm, but to enjoy myself excessively into the bargain. What with moose-hunting and sleighing and tobogging parties, the time never hung heavily on my hands; and as, from the windows of the gas-lighted room in which I am now writing, I look out upon the yellow fog of a London November, I think of the pleasant days I passed amidst Canadian snows, and wish that I could transport myself back again to my old quarters in Toronto, or to that snug little shanty on the Upper St. Regis where I was first initiated into the mysteries of backwoods life and learnt to love the Wilderness.

CHAPTER XI.

Off to the Antipodes—Alone in the World—The Golden City—A Model Hotel—A Table d'Hôte in Melbourne—The Three Classes of Gold Diggers—The Gentleman Digger — The Australian Micawber — The Speculative Digger—The Genuine Digger—An old Friend in a new Dress — The Habits of the first Gold-diggers—"New Chum"—Colonial Costume—The Streets of Melbourne—An Australian Bar—A little Dancing Party.

ON the fifteenth day of August, if I mistake not, in the year of grace 1857, the fine screw-steamer, *Emu* — Small, commander — dropped anchor in Hobson's Bay. How it arose that I happened to be on her list of passengers, I am unable to state; for up to this hour I have never satisfactorily accounted for the reasons which induced me to leave my native land, and make a voyage to the antipodes. But this much is certain: that on a morning in the month of August, in the year of grace aforesaid, I stood on the deck of the steamer *Emu*, straining my eyes in the direction of the shore to catch my first glimpse of Australian soil. The prospect

was by no means cheering. I could just distinguish the pier of Sandridge and the railway-station—everything else was enshrouded in mist. All was noise and confusion on deck. The steam was screaming through the pipes, sailors rushing about with the mail-boxes, and passengers making frantic inquiries after their luggage or how they were to reach the shore. Everyone appeared excited but myself. Some of the passengers were returning to what to them was home; many were expecting friends, all had some definite object in view, I alone excepted; and as hands were wrung, and cordial greetings exchanged around me, I felt sick at heart and alone in the world. The passengers departed one by one, and yet I made no move. What had I to do ashore? No one was awaiting me; for, with the exception of my fellow-passengers who had left the ship, I knew not a soul in the colony. I fell into a reverie, and heartily wished that I had at my command Prince Hassan's magic carpet, to re-transport myself to the Liverpool landing-stage, which I had left but two short months before. I felt a hand on my shoulder, and turning round, beheld Small, our captain, who kindly asked me whether I would like to be put ashore in his gig or would prefer taking a last dinner on board the *Emu*. I decided upon

the former course; and having bade a sorrowful adieu to the captain and his officers—better men than whom never broke biscuit—I stepped into the boat, and in a few minutes was deposited, bag and baggage, on the pier at Sandridge. It had commenced raining, and I looked round for a porter to carry my luggage to the station, but not a porter was to be seen; and a bearded, unkempt individual, whom I took in my ignorance for a navvy, but who was no doubt a wealthy gold-digger, looked at me in such a savage manner when I asked him to assist me, that, not having the hardihood to repeat the request, I became my own porter, and meekly carried my portmanteaus, one by one, to the depôt. A few minutes more, and I found myself in the Golden City, surrounded by a mob of car-drivers and draymen, all fighting for the possession of myself and my luggage in the most Hibernian manner. At any other time, some of them would have felt the weight of my boot, but I was too dispirited to take any notice of their insolence, and passively submitted to being appropriated by a car-driver, whilst my luggage was taken charge of by a friendly dray-man, who appeared to be the cock of the walk.

"Where did I want to be driven to?"

The Criterion—and to the Criterion we went,

a distance of a few hundred yards in a direct line; my rascally driver, however, taking advantage of my ignorance, and making a detour of a mile or more to cheat me out of treble his fare. I paid both him and his brother villain the drayman, without a murmur, and entered the portals of the Criterion, of the magnificence of which hostelry I had heard the most glowing accounts from some Australian gentlemen in London.

I cannot say that I found the Criterion at all worthy of the high eulogium which had been sounded in its honour—quite the reverse. I wandered about for some time without finding a soul to minister to my wants, and when a slatternly housemaid did at length make her appearance she failed to treat me with that amount of courtesy to which I had been accustomed in the mother country.

Oh, I wanted a room, did I? Well, she couldn't say whether there was one vacant, but she'd let me know by-and-by. Need not bother myself about my luggage, it was safe in the passage; no one would think of stealing it. Was there a smoking-room? Why, in course there was—and without condescending to show me *where* it was situated, off she flounced leaving

me standing disconsolately in the entrance-hall. After searching for some time, I found a small but sufficiently comfortable sitting-room: where I patiently awaited the re-appearance of the chambermaid, and in about two hours' time she did thrust her by no means handsome figure-head in at the door.

"I've been looking all over the place for you," quoth the amiable damsel; "come along, and I'll show you your room." And she did—but what a room! It was a facsimile of one of those dens provided by our military authorities at Chatham and other depôts for the habitation of miserable ensigns, in which you can open the door, shut the window, poke the fire, and get into bed from a certain spot in the centre of the carpet. However, it was Hobson's choice. As no other room was to be had, I was obliged to put up with it, only begging of the chambermaid, as a great favour, that she would clean the place up as soon as convenient, for it had only just been vacated, and had evidently been occupied by some drunken individual on the previous night.

The *table d'hôte* at the Criterion, although perhaps not quite so well supplied as that of the Hôtel de Flandres at Brussels, was nevertheless pretty good in its way, and well worth seeing. In the large dining-room of the hotel a more motley

crowd sat down to dinner than could, I think, have been collected in any other city in the world. Representatives of every nation under the sun were there mingled together in hopeless confusion—English, Irish, French, Germans, Americans, Russians, Greeks, Poles—men of all religions (Jews, Turks, infidels, and heretics)—of all colours, speaking all languages, wearing all garbs. There one might see the cunning hooked-nose Israelite, who would purchase gold dust to any amount, seated alongside a rough-bearded digger who had come down to Melbourne for a three days' spree, and a weather-beaten American ship captain bolting his food next to the well-bred University-educated Englishman, whom the gambling-table or betting-ring had driven to seek his fortune in another clime.

The genus Digger was in great force, and the race might be divided into three classes. Firstly, the "gentleman digger," who, notwithstanding his rough neglected appearance, could always be distinguished from the common herd by those thousand and one unmistakeable attributes which, despite poverty and moral degradation, invariably cling to the well-bred man. On grand occasions he would come out strong in a cabbage-tree hat, black necktie, Melton coat, with or without waistcoat, Bedford cords, and top-boots.

When cheered for a moment by some unexpected slice of good fortune, or the arrival in the colony of an old friend, he would drop for a time the coarse language he had learnt amongst his digger friends, and would again "haw, haw," and "positively demmy," much in the same manner as he had been used in happier days to do at Brazenose, or at the mess of some crack dragoon regiment. He was by no means a bad fellow, and to use a common but exceedingly foolish phrase, was "nobody's enemy but his own."

Before I went to Australia I was always at a loss to understand what became of those unfortunates who, having, like the prodigal son, wasted all their substance in riotous living, found themselves thrown upon the world without knowing a single useful art by which to gain their daily bread. In France, when Adolphe and Alfred have spent their all on some ballet dancer or actress, and they have no more money wherewith to minister to her extravagant wants, they either commit suicide or enlist in some regiment stationed in Algeria, where an Arab bullet, absinthe, or fever, speedily puts an end to their miseries. With us in England it is different; men are inclined to think with Hamlet that it is better to

"Bear those ills we have,
Than fly to others that we know not of;"

and enlisting is a decidedly unpopular proceeding, and only resorted to in extreme cases. What, then, becomes of our unfortunate prodigals when they are thrown upon their own resources? The question is easily answered. A great number of them screw sufficient money out of their friends to pay their passage, and emigrate to Australia. There they may be found in almost every capacity —hewers of wood, drawers of water, and, when more than ordinarily intelligent, in places of trust, such as bullock-drivers and shepherds, on distant stations in the interior. Worn with disease, the bodies of these unhappy men are totally unfit for the hard work they are forced to undergo, and they are speedily "rubbed out" of the land of the living. Australia is the oubliette of England. But to return to our gentleman digger; he rarely makes sufficient by the sweat of his brow to pay his expenses, and depends, in a great measure, on the bounty of his friends at home, who, on the sole condition that he remains in exile, supply him from time to time with just sufficient money to keep body and soul together. These small remittances occasionally miscarry, and then great is the consternation of the unhappy victim of postal negligence. He goes to any one whom he thinks has a few spare pounds in his pocket, and begs for a small loan, until the arrival of the next

steamer from England, when he will be certain of receiving what he facetiously terms his "allowance." His hopes are often disappointed, and he has to wait patiently until *something turns up*.

Mr. Dickens did perfectly right in packing Micawber off to Australia, for the genus Micawber abounds in that colony. The Australian Micawber resembles, in a great measure, his English prototype. He soon finds out your places of resort, and lays wait for you at some bar to which you are accustomed to repair for your midday "nobbler." You are invariably the very man he wanted to see—it was by the merest chance he met you—could you oblige him with a temporary loan of five pounds? No! how very unfortunate! Could you let him have three pounds? —two pounds?—one pound even? What, not even a paltry pound?—well, then, ten shillings—only half-a-crown, just *until something turns up*. That's always the infernal burden of their song. I myself have been victimized, and whenever I hear a man make use of that confounded Micawberish expression, I immediately turn a deaf ear to his petition, and would not lend him a penny to save him from death or starvation.

The second class of diggers consists of men who, being of a speculative turn, and averse to

downright hard work, have invested in some quartz-crushing company whatever little money they may have been able to scrape together; and a most hazardous investment it is, a fortune being often made in a few months, only to be again lost in some less profitable undertaking.

In the third class alone is to be found the genuine digger, or one who, with sinews of iron and an adamantine constitution, braves every hardship and privation in the pursuit of gold, and who is buoyed up with the hope that he may one day by some lucky chance find a sufficient quantity of the precious metal to enable him to leave the colony and end his days in his native land. But in my description of the guests, I have drifted far away from my dinner-table at the Criterion. A German band discoursed what was intended for sweet music during the repast, and, at its conclusion, coffee and cigars were handed round, and the utmost freedom prevailed. It was a perfect Babel, and I was not sorry to beat a retreat, and retire to the sitting-room upstairs. I found that several gentlemen had preceded me, and were already imbibing hot whisky-punch, and puffing away at a furious rate. One hirsute individual, dressed in true gentleman-digger style, who was standing in front of the fire as I entered, immediately began scrutinizing me from head to foot, in such a marked

manner that I felt excessively indignant. All at once a happy inspiration seemed to strike him, and, making a dive at me, he brought down his enormous paw on my shoulder, and exclaimed "Tapley! by all that's wonderful—what in heaven's name has brought you, of all men in the world, out here, old fellow?" and seizing me by both hands, he wrung them till they were nearly dislocated.

Who he was, I had no more idea than the man in the moon, and I hinted as much.

"What! you don't recollect me?" he cried. "Ah! to be sure, I am sadly changed since you knew me in Paris—but you don't forget S., do you, old fellow?"

I could hardly believe my eyes. But yes, whatever change there might be in the outward man, there could be no mistaking the poor fellow's loud, cheerful voice; it was S., sure enough. But what a change from the S. of former days! When I first knew him in Paris he was a gay, wild, thoughtless fellow, recently come in for a large fortune, which he was doing his best to throw to the winds. No better turned-out mail-phaeton in the Bois than his—no dinners at Philippe's ordered with less regard to expense than were those he gave his friends—no better

known face behind the scenes than was that of my poor friend S. And now there he stood before me, in a digger's dress, and that none of the cleanest—dissipated-looking, neglected, a mere wreck of his former self. His story was a common one in the colony. The gaming-table, false friends, worthless women, had been his ruin; and with just sufficient to keep him from actual starvation, saved from the general wreck, he had left England to hide his face in a land where his follies and misfortunes were unknown. He had been, he said, for two years or more at the diggings at Anderson's Creek, but he had been very unfortunate, and had hardly seen the colour of gold. There was no use going to Ararat or any of the new diggings, for he knew that his bad luck would follow him wherever he went. Besides, the Anderson's Creek diggings, although poor, were at all events near Melbourne, and he could run down for a day's spree whenever he felt inclined, without incurring much expense. His friends, he owned, had been kinder to him than he deserved, and sent him occasional remittances, but he was sick and disgusted with the world, and heartily wished he was out of it.

Seeing an old face again soon brightened him up, and I tried to cheer him by telling him of the

many changes that had taken place amongst his former friends and acquaintances, and how many, like himself, had gone to the wall; whilst he, in his turn, gave me the benefit of his Australian experiences, and amused me with humorous stories of colonial life. By his account, Melbourne was by no means the same sort of place that it had been some few years before. The town had become altogether too civilized, and the diggers were too clever by half. You ought, he said, to have seen Melbourne some four years since, when the diggings were in full swing, and the diggers totally ignorant of the value of money. A fortunate digger who had, perhaps, never known what it was to have a five-pound note in his pocket, suddenly finding himself possessed of two thousand pounds' worth of gold dust, would forthwith proceed to Melbourne and spend it like a gentleman. His gold dust having been converted into current coin of the realm, he would deposit the whole amount in the hands of some amiable landlord, whom he would needlessly caution by no means to forget to inform him whenever the money was expended. This the host having faithfully promised to do, and the digger's mind being at rest on that score, he would next proceed to take unto himself a wife.

He was generally suited before many hours were over, for, provided that the lady of his choice could swear a little and drink a great deal, she was just the woman for him, and he did not think it necessary to trouble himself about either her character or antecedents. His offer of marriage having been duly accepted, his purse was immediately placed at her disposal, and the coy fair one would start out, accompanied by her enamoured swain, on a shopping expedition. Nothing was too good for her. Silks, satins, laces, jewellery, all purchased at the most exorbitant prices, were humbly laid at the feet of his charmer, and the trousseau having been thus duly provided, they would the very next morning be united in the holy bonds of matrimony. The bride, attired in the most expensive dress that could be procured for the occasion—her coarse features made still coarser by a white lace bonnet, her great red paws encased in primrose-coloured gloves—would, immediately after the ceremony, drive, preceded by a band, through the principal streets of the town, her semi-intoxicated lord, with his feet cocked up on the front seat of the carriage, and a short black clay-pipe between his teeth, occupying the post of honour at her side.

The bridal chamber at the Criterion would be

hired at a fabulous price for the occasion, and the friends of both parties supplied with the most expensive wines at the bridegroom's cost, the entertainment being usually brought to a conclusion by a general "drunk." This was a "digger's wedding," and all for a time would go merrily as a marriage bell; but some fine morning, before the honeymoon was half over, the conscientious landlord would call master digger aside and quietly tell him that there were but a few pounds left of all his former riches, and that he must therefore prepare to "vamose the ranche." With a sorrowful heart our ci-devant millionaire would manfully buss his bereaved bride (who would manage to squeeze out a few crocodile tears for the occasion), and "humping his drum," start off for the diggings to seek more gold. Hardly was he well clear of the town ere his weeping wife would console herself by picking up another wealthy mate, and the same scene would be enacted and a like farce played until he likewise had been cleared out and packed off to the diggings. Oh, those were the days to see life in Melbourne! The diggers are too shrewd now, and weddings are pretty much the same stupid humdrum affairs that they are in the mother country. My first evening at the Criterion

passed away in a much pleasanter manner than I had anticipated, for our circle round the fire comprised, besides S. and myself, an Irish clergyman, who must have been a veritable Massillon in the pulpit were his sermons only one-half as palatable as his whisky punch—a Melbourne auctioneer, a squatter from South Australia, and three or four diggers of the better class. On our party breaking up for the night, S. promised to call upon me the first thing in the morning, and act as my cicerone in and about Melbourne, so that I might be initiated into the mysteries of colonial life without loss of time.

He was as good as his word, and under his guidance I sallied forth to see the wonders of that golden city of which I had heard so much. Hardly had I left the portals of the hotel when my ears were saluted with the cry of "new chum." I took no notice of it at first, thinking that it was some colonial cry unknown to English ears, but a small boy whom we met immediately afterwards soon undeceived me, for, putting his finger to his nose, and winking his eye at me in the most unmistakeable manner, he likewise shouted the selfsame words in my ear.

"What's all that about?" I asked S.

"Why, to tell you the plain truth, old fellow,"

he answered, "the reason they call out 'new chum' after you is, because they know from your dress and appearance that you have not been long in the colony: in fact, 'new chum' means fresh arrival. Now, if I were you, I would, to avoid annoyance, get myself rigged out in colonial style before we go any farther. It won't cost very much, and it is always the wisest plan to adapt yourself to the customs of the inhabitants."

"No doubt; but what do you wish me to buy?"

"Why, a cabbage-tree hat, and a pair of big boots—your shooting coat will do well enough; but stick on a pair of 'cords,' if you have them—they look more colonial."

I complied with my friend's request, and in a few minutes became the happy possessor of a cabbage-tree hat, for which I paid the modest sum of two pounds, and a pair of jack boots, for which I paid three. True, the boots pinched me excessively, and my cabbage-tree hat was far from comfortable, but S. assured me that they became me wonderfully, and that I looked twice the man I did before. So, as "pride knows no pain," I trudged along, and bore my afflictions without a murmur.

What shall I say of the streets of Melbourne? Sala has written on the streets of the world—I

wonder whether in his travels he ever had the pleasure of seeing the main sewer of Melbourne—Elizabeth Street—during the rainy season. Melbourne, like Rome, is built on several small hills, and between the two principal ones is situated the delightful street in question. When I first saw it (it must be remembered that I speak of the year 1857), it had more the appearance of a rapid mountain-torrent than a main street in the metropolis of Victoria. It had been raining heavily during the night, and the large gutters in Bourke and Collins Streets (the two principal thoroughfares of the town), together with many minor ones, were pouring their tributary waters into Elizabeth Street aforesaid. Being bound to Bourke Street, we had to cross this turbid river, and I began to tremble for my new boots, for the waters appeared to be both deep and muddy; but on reaching the foot of the above-mentioned street I found lots of drays and cars in which one could be put across for a trifle. One was immediately chartered by S., and for the small consideration of sixpence we were deposited in safety on the other side. Had I not seen it with my own eyes, I would never have believed that, in the nineteenth century, the sewage of a town like Melbourne could be in such a state as to render a vehicle absolutely necessary, if one did not desire to

wade up to the knees in muddy water, or run the risk of being knocked off one's legs by the current, as I believe has more than once happened to individuals in this very Elizabeth Street which I have just described. In my day, Bourke Street was *the* street of Melbourne. In it were situated the theatre, post-office, and many of those groggeries in which the diggers most did congregate. The coaches to Castlemaine and Bendigo started from this locality, and the drivers of cars innumerable would shout their destination to you as you passed, for the Australians are as great a car-driving people as the Irish, and a walk to Emerald Hill or St. Kilda was not to be thought of if any kind of a conveyance were to be had. We followed the general example, and drove out to the Botanical Gardens, of which, if of nothing else, the Melbournians have good reason to be proud. These gardens are situated on the banks of the Yarra-Yarra, and are laid out in a manner which reflects the highest credit on their originator. The ground is undulating, the walks are broad and well kept, whilst the trees are planted and the beds laid out in the best possible taste. From the Gardens we continued our drive to St. Kilda, one of the watering places in the vicinity of Melbourne, and the afternoon having turned out fine, there was a considerable number of pleasure-seekers, whose

chief amusement appeared to consist in throwing stones at one another, or "nobblerizing" at the bar of the nearest public house. S. and myself took our stand close to one of these bars, and I amused myself by watching "ye manners and customs of ye Australian race in ye nineteenth century." It is a thousand pities that Doyle was not there likewise, so that the admirers of "Punch" might have had one really true sketch of colonial life.

There were, of course, diggers of every denomination: rough, blustering specimens of humanity, conscious of having money in their pockets, and of their ability to get more—liberal, good-natured fellows when properly handled, but apt to get angry if their proffered dram were declined. Then, evidently out of his element, patiently awaiting his turn at the bar, might be seen the unhappy "new chum." Dressed either in a suit of the most unmistakeably Mosaical description, or else in such ultra-colonial style as to put even the young "cornstalks" in the background, our poor friend was easily spotted. Little money had he in his possession—dark were his prospects for the future; and, as he fumbled in his pockets for one of the few remaining coins to pay for his dram, he would heave a sigh which seemed to say, "Oh that I were once again back in old

England! Fool that I was to yield the substance for the shadow, and throw up my good situation in London in the hopes of making a fortune in this accursed land!"

Australian Laïs, bepowdered, berouged, and dressed in the most excruciatingly bad taste, was likewise there, surrounded by admirers, who kept replenishing her glass with a delectable mixture of sherry and maraschino. I think that she would have preferred "blue ruin," and only called for the other tipple to show her refined taste, and charm the digger element by her extravagance. It was altogether such a novel and amusing sight that I could have remained for hours quietly watching the chief actors on the scene; but it was not so to S., who, under the pretence that further delay would make us late for dinner, hurried me back to Melbourne. That evening we went to the theatre, but, as the acting was not first-rate, S. soon proposed that we should adjourn to a neighbouring dancing-saloon, where we could see a little of Melbourne fast life, and thither we repaired accordingly. This dancing-saloon proved to be as I had expected—something between the "Pic" and a "hop" in one of our own sea-board cities, whilst the company was, if possible, of even a more mixed description than the company at such places usually is. Besides

the inevitable digger, there was a fair sprinkling of mates of vessels, clerks, shop-boys, young "cornstalks," and last, not least, "new chums," many of whom were in a decided state of "beer." Of the beauty and elegance of their partners I cannot speak highly. Candour obliges me to say that they were not as a rule favourable specimens of English womanhood, being blowsy, coarse, and ill-bred—in fact, just the sort of sirens to captivate susceptible beings of the digger genus, or men who think, with the Moors, that the only way to estimate a woman is by her size and weight.

The dancing was certainly more energetic than graceful; but then it must be borne in mind that the legs of a considerable number of the "figurants" were encased in heavy thigh-boots, and that the tight high-heeled ditto of the ladies were badly suited to a display of agility on the light fastastic toe. It would have made M. Coulon open his eyes had he seen the variety of steps which were executed in even one figure of a quadrille; for every known "pas," from the measured stamp of the Indian war-dance to the double-shuffle of the sailor's hornpipe, appeared to have its votaries. But it was in the waltzing line that these Australian worshippers of Terpsichore came out the strongest. The way they

hugged their partners was a caution to bears; and a couple once fairly started, woe to the unfortunate mortal who crossed their track. Down he was sure to go in a trice, for nothing could stay their headlong course. If one might judge from the amount of liquor consumed between the performances, the thirst engendered by these unwonted exertions in the "mazy" must have been something fearful; and before we quitted the gay and festive scene the face of more than one "fair" damsel was flushed with something else besides dancing. As we wended our way homewards, my friend, who appeared determined that I should not have reason to accuse him of being a bad cicerone to fast-life in Melbourne, took me to some of the most frequented "bars" of the city, where we imbibed several "nobblers" of vile brandy, S. striving hard all the while to get up a row for my especial edification and amusement. In this amiable endeavour he was, I am happy to say, disappointed, the rain having apparently taken the "fight" out of everyone; and we regained our hotel at a comparatively early hour, in what S. hiccuped out to be "a mosht scandushly shober conditionsh for gentlemensh."

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

00020267

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 19 September, 2016